

UNCLE CHARLIE'S Fables

JULY
NO. 4

10¢

ALL NEW AND ORIGINAL STORIES



AUTHORIZED
A. C. M. P.

CONFORMS
to the
COMICS
CODE

LEV GLEASON
PUBLICATIONS

CHARLES
BIRO



WEB COMIC UNIVERSE.COM

WHAT
KIND OF
STORIES
ARE YOU
GOING TO
TELL US
THIS TIME,
UNCLE
CHARLIE?

TELL
US ONE
LIKE
ROBIN
HOOD!

PLEASE
MAKE ONE
VERY
ROMANTIC!

SUPPOSE
I START WITH
A FUNNY ONE—
ABOUT PETER
PESTER!

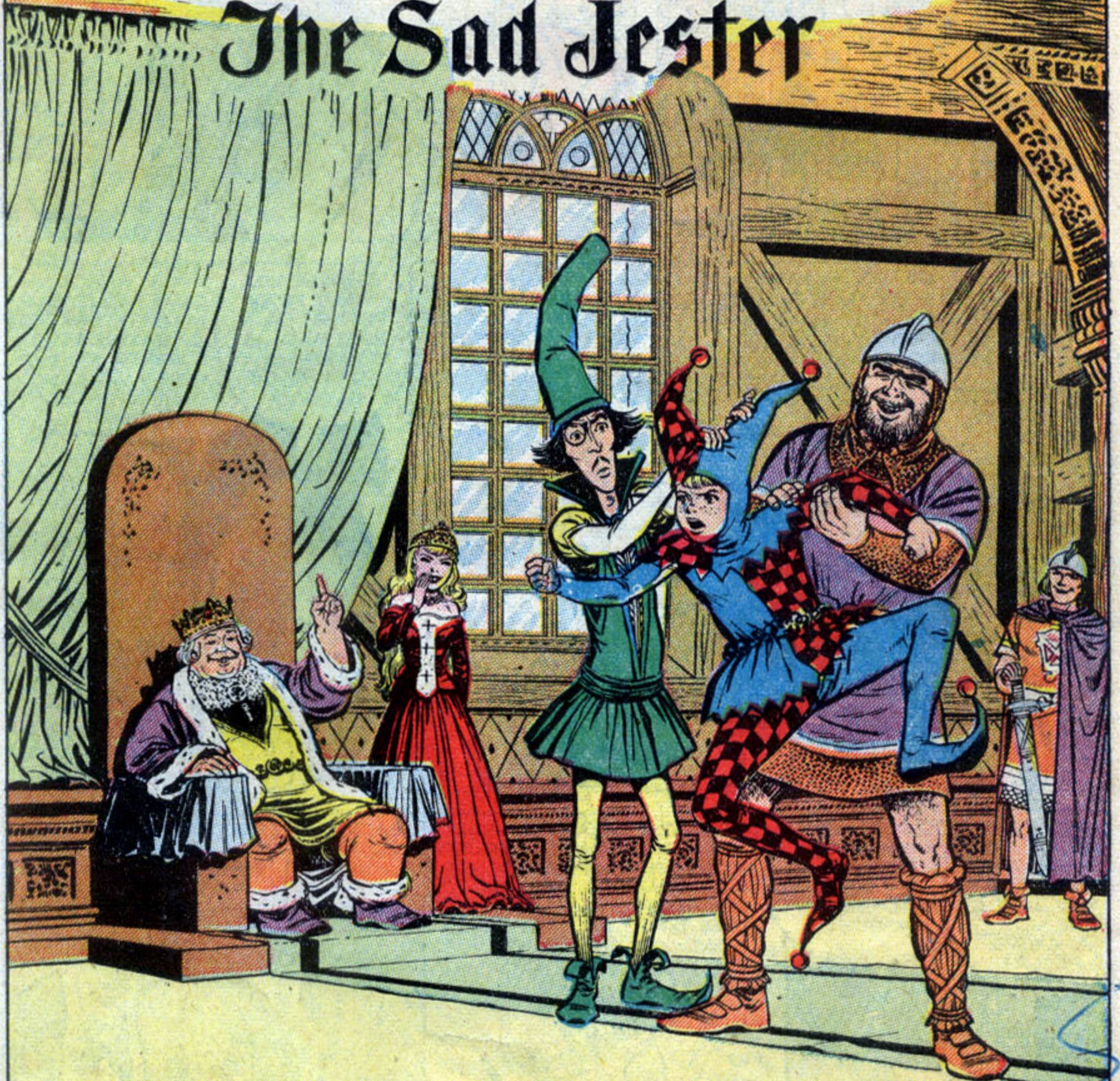
I DON'T
CARE WHAT
THEY'RE ABOUT—
AS LONG AS
YOU START
TELLING!



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Peter Pester

The Sad Jester



If you were Ginger Peachy, Pokey Slow, or Yak Yakety in the castle on the hill amid rolling vineyards and fields of softly swaying wheat, and you would this day be free to play the whole day through, wouldn't your throat want to burst forth

with a long scream of joy? But, not if you were Peter Pester. To Peter, the royal baker, it is just another day for wishing - wishing for excitement and glory. I will tell you about Peter's desire, and how he found it for an exciting, but brief time...

(UNCLE) CHARLIE BIRO

UNCLE CHARLIE'S FABLES

BLAST KING GROUSE FOR LURING MY COURT JESTER AWAY WITH A FEW EXTRA PIECES OF GOLD IN SALARY! I HAVEN'T HAD A GOOD LAUGH IN A WEEK! FIND ME ANOTHER JESTER, WEEVIC! AT ONCE!

YES, YOUR MAJESTY! YES, SIR! RIGHT AWAY!

BLESS MY SOUL! WHERE CAN I FIND ONE?

I'M SICK OF THIS BAKERY! THERE'S NO DIGNITY IN THIS JOB. WHOEVER GAVE A FEAST IN HONOR OF A COOKIE MAKER? I WISH I HAD THE COURAGE TO GO IN AND TELL KING ROLLY HOW I FEEL!

BEING A BAKER IS NOT EXCITING! IT IS NOT LIKE FIGHTING PIRATES! IT IS NOT LIKE HUNTING IN THE FOREST! IT IS NOT ADVENTUROUS! IT IS NOT GAY! IT IS NOT FUN! IT IS NOT ROMANTIC!

YAK YAKETY MEANS IT'S DULL!

I WON'T BOTHER HIM! HE'S TOO BUSY WITH AFFAIRS OF STATE! STOP PUSHING ME, YAK YAKETY!

HE MAY MAKE YOU A CAPTAIN IN THE ROYAL GUARDS! HE MAY APPOINT YOU A COMMANDER OF A SHIP IN THE ROYAL NAVY! HE MAY BE WISHING TO HIRE A SWORDSMAN FOR HIS ROYAL GUARD!

WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF? WE'RE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!

OH, DEAR, I HOPE THE KING DOES NOT BECOME ANGRY AT PETER!

WHAT DO YOU WANT, PETER PESTER? I'M A BUSY MAN! IS SOMETHING WRONG AT THE BAKERY?

THAT'S WHAT I CAME ABOUT, YOUR MAJESTY! I AM TIRED OF BAKING BREAD! I WANT A JOB WITH MORE IMPORTANCE... MORE RESPONSIBILITY AND DIGNITY...

DIGNITY? HA, HA! FOR A DOUGHNUT MAKER LIKE YOU THAT IS REALLY AMUSING, PETER!

DO NOT LAUGH, KING ROLLY! I AM A POLISHED SWORDSMAN-WATCH!

ALL RIGHT, YOU BLACK GUARD, EN GARDE! TAKE THAT AND...

GOOD HEAVENS! THE CHANDELIER! OH, LOOK OUT, PETER!

HA HA HA HO HO

BACK, YOU LILY-LIVERED COWARD! BACK... OOOOF!

STOP IT, PETER! I'LL CHOKE FROM LAUGHING! YOU'RE SOME DUELIST! HO! HO! HA, HA, HA! HO, HO!

NOT ONLY THAT, KING ROLLY, BUT I COULD BE A DIPLOMAT! I HAVE QUITE A FLAIR FOR PRETTY PHRASES AND WITTY SAYINGS! MY FRIENDS HAVE TOLD ME THAT I COULD TALK ANYONE INTO ANYTHING!

BLESS MY SOUL! THIS GETS BETTER AND BETTER! WEEVIL, FETCH FINCHLEY, MY CHIEF AMBASSADOR! I'LL GIVE YOU A CHANCE, PESTER! IF YOU CAN TALK FINCHLEY INTO TAKING YOUR JOB IN THE BAKERY, YOU CAN HAVE THE POSITION!

I AM PRIVILEGED TO OFFER YOU A MOST PRIZED POSITION, MY DEAR FINCHLEY—A JOB THAT MANY MEN HAVE FOUGHT AND DIED TO OBTAIN—THAT OF ROYAL BAKER! THINK OF THE SPIRITUAL JOYS OF BAKING A GOOD CAKE, AND BEST OF ALL, YOU CAN EAT ALL YOU WANT!

I SAY... BY JOVE, IS THE BOY DAFT?

SIR FINCHLEY MUST NOT LIKE CAKE, BUT I HAVE NOT DEMONSTRATED MY SKILL AS AN ARCHER, KING ROLLY! POINT OUT ANY TARGET, AND I SHALL PIERCE IT WITH THIS ARROW!

VERY WELL, PETER! SEE IF YOU CAN HIT THAT ROYAL SHIELD!

I'M THE CHIEF AMBASSADOR! I'LL STAND NO MORE OF IT!

YEEOW!

GET HIM OUT OF HERE BEFORE HE KILLS SOMEONE! HO! HO! HE MAY NOT BE ALL HE SAYS HE IS, BUT HE IS THE FUNNIEST!

WAIT, KING ROLLY! YOU HAVE NOT LAUGHED SO HARD SINCE YOUR JESTER LEFT! I HAVE HIS OLD UNIFORM HERE! PERHAPS PETER PESTER MIGHT DO?

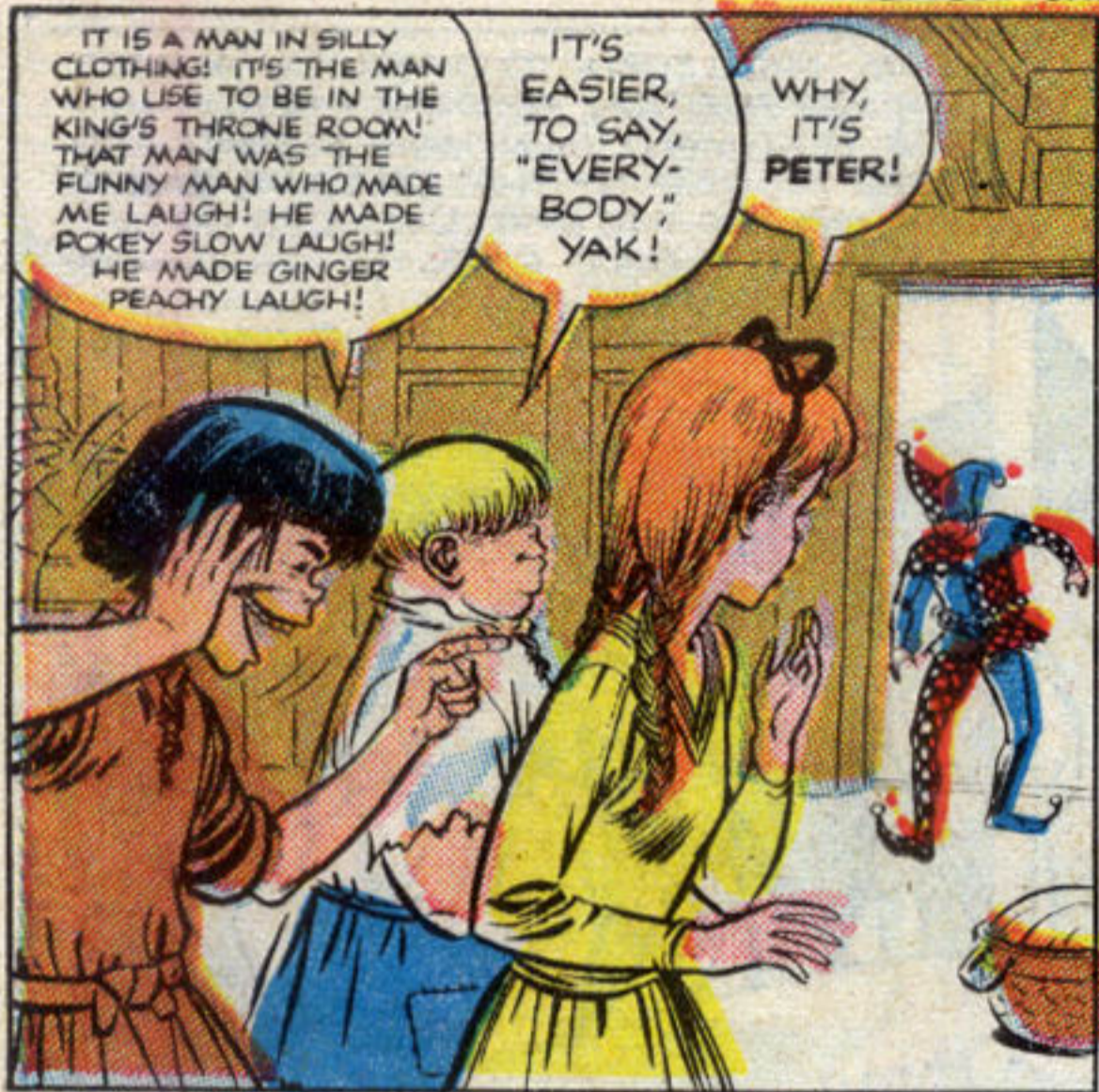
WEEVIL, FOR ONCE I BELIEVE YOU'RE RIGHT! COME BACK, PESTER, YOU'RE HIRED AS MY NEW COURT JESTER! PUT ON HIS UNIFORM, WEEVIL!

COURT JESTER? BUT THERE IS NO DIGNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THAT JOB!

I WILL PAY YOU TEN GOLD PIECES A WEEK, PETER! YOU CANNOT REFUSE SUCH AN OFFER!

NO, I WON'T PLAY THE FOOL! I WON'T! L.. TWENTY GOLD PIECES? GOSH!

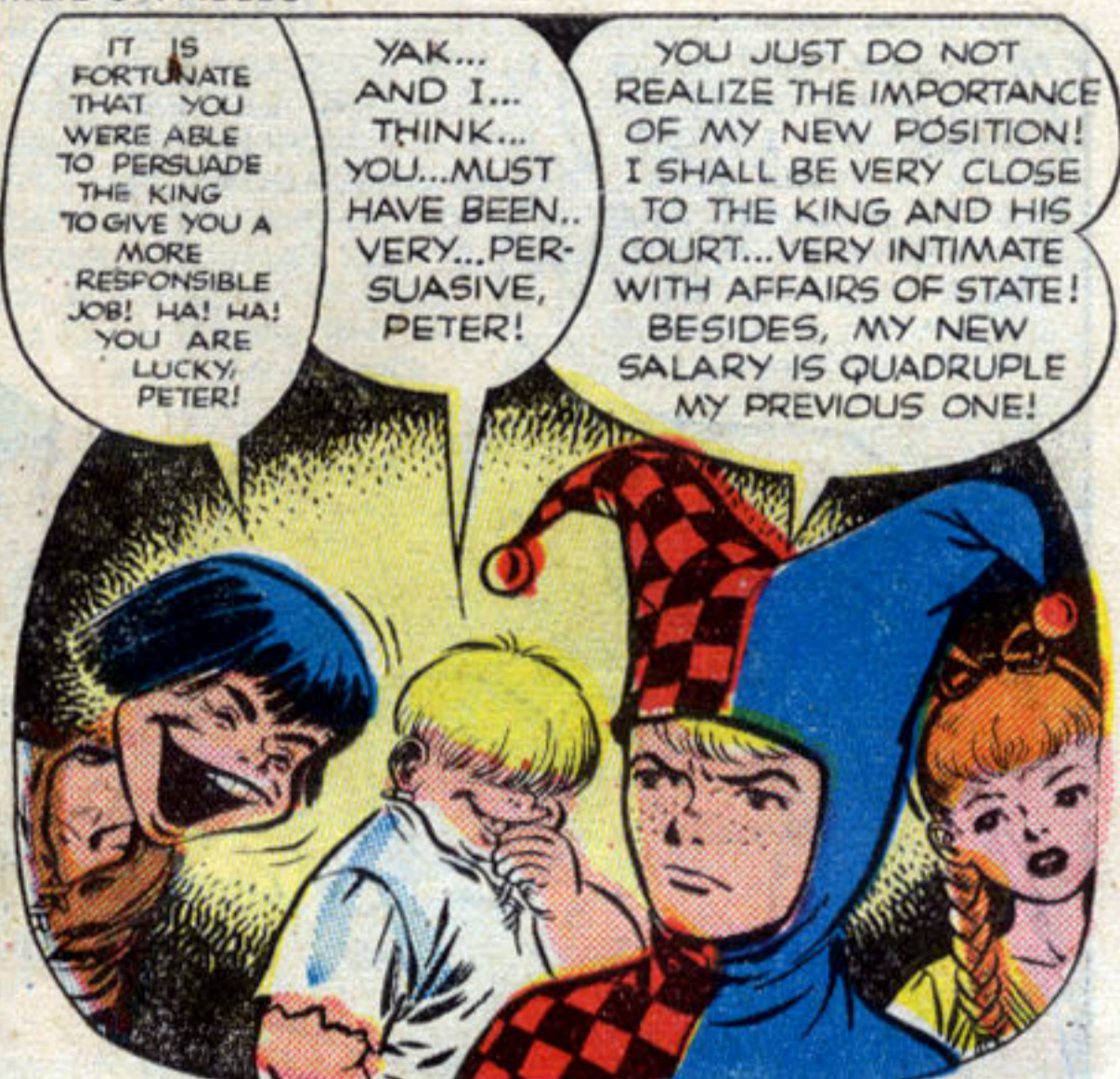
WELL, THEN, I'LL GO TWENTY!



IT IS A MAN IN SILLY CLOTHING! IT'S THE MAN WHO USE TO BE IN THE KING'S THRONE ROOM! THAT MAN WAS THE FUNNY MAN WHO MADE ME LAUGH! HE MADE POKEY SLOW LAUGH! HE MADE GINGER PEACHY LAUGH!

IT'S EASIER, TO SAY, "EVERY-BODY," YAK!

WHY, IT'S PETER!



IT IS FORTUNATE THAT YOU WERE ABLE TO PERSUADE THE KING TO GIVE YOU A MORE RESPONSIBLE JOB! HA! HA! YOU ARE LUCKY, PETER!

YAK... AND I... THINK... YOU...MUST HAVE BEEN.. VERY...PER-SUASIVE, PETER!

YOU JUST DO NOT REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF MY NEW POSITION! I SHALL BE VERY CLOSE TO THE KING AND HIS COURT...VERY INTIMATE WITH AFFAIRS OF STATE! BESIDES, MY NEW SALARY IS QUADRUPLE MY PREVIOUS ONE!



DON'T BE BLUE, PETER! YOU WILL BE BELOVED AND ADMIRER BY EVERYONE! YOU WILL BE FAMOUS!

I WOULD LIKE TO GO INTO THE COURT! I WOULD LIKE TO WEAR ROYAL ROBES! I WOULD LIKE TO TRY ON THE ROYAL CROWN! I COULD NOT DO THAT WHEN THE KING IS THERE!

HE MEANS... HE WOULD... LIKE...TO GO INTO... THE COURT WHEN IT...IS EMPTY, PETER! AND I...WOULD, TOO...

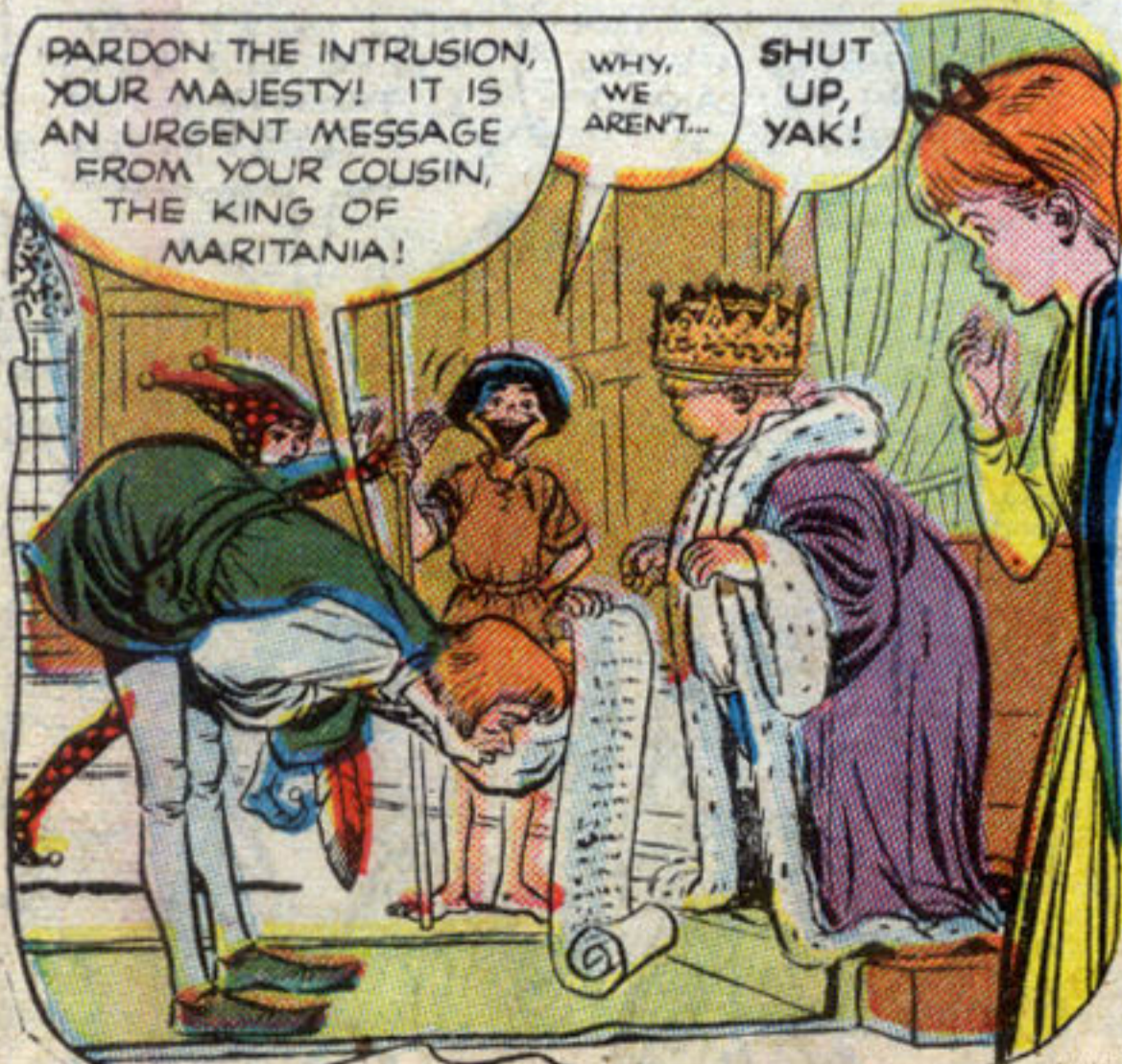
THAT WILL BE EASY! COME WITH ME NOW...THE KING IS IN HIS BATH!



AH, MY FAITHFUL SUBJECTS...KNEEL DOWN...AND...PAY ME HOMAGE...

I HAVE NEVER WORN VELVET BEFORE! IT IS SO SOFT AND WARM! I FEEL LIKE A PRINCESS!

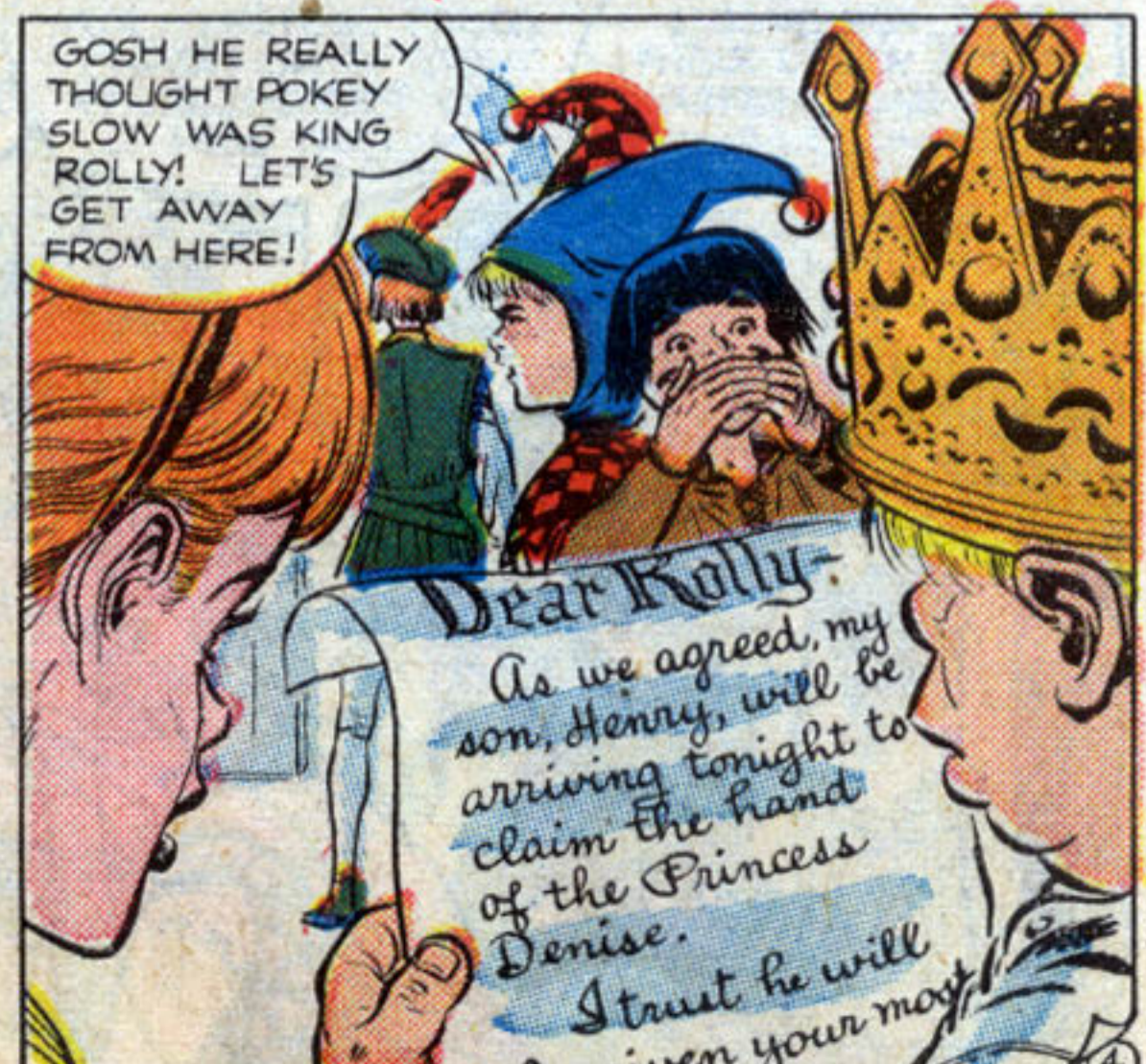
WE CANNOT STAY TOO LONG! OH, OH, SOMEONE IS COMING!



PARDON THE INTRUSION, YOUR MAJESTY! IT IS AN URGENT MESSAGE FROM YOUR COUSIN, THE KING OF MARITANIA!

WHY, WE AREN'T...

SHUT UP, YAK!

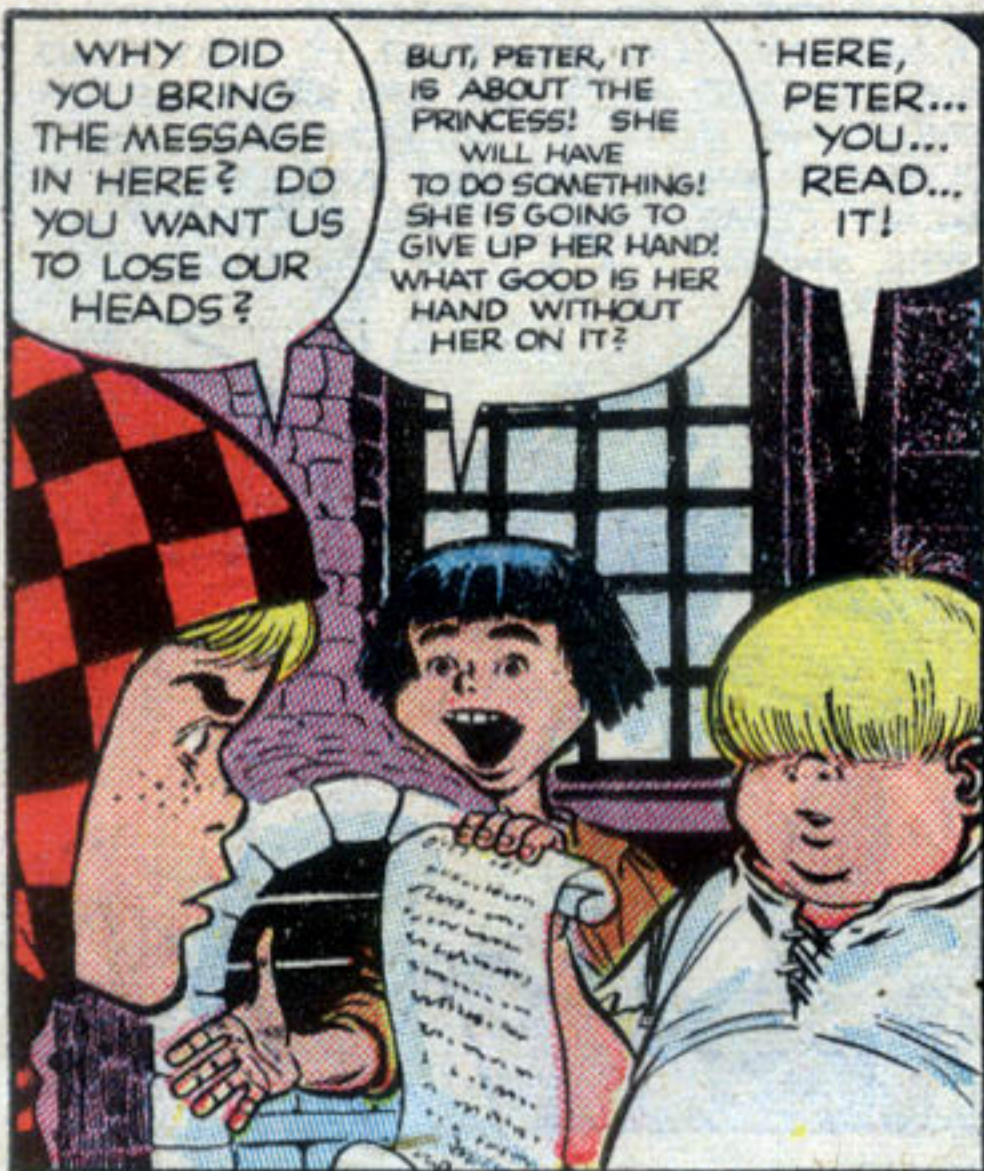


GOSH HE REALLY THOUGHT POKEY SLOW WAS KING ROLLY! LET'S GET AWAY FROM HERE!

Dear Rolly-

As we agreed, my son, Henry, will be arriving tonight to claim the hand of the Princess Denise.

I trust he will give you my love.



WHY DID YOU BRING THE MESSAGE IN HERE? DO YOU WANT US TO LOSE OUR HEADS?

BUT, PETER, IT IS ABOUT THE PRINCESS! SHE WILL HAVE TO DO SOMETHING! SHE IS GOING TO GIVE UP HER HAND! WHAT GOOD IS HER HAND WITHOUT HER ON IT?

HERE, PETER... YOU... READ... IT!



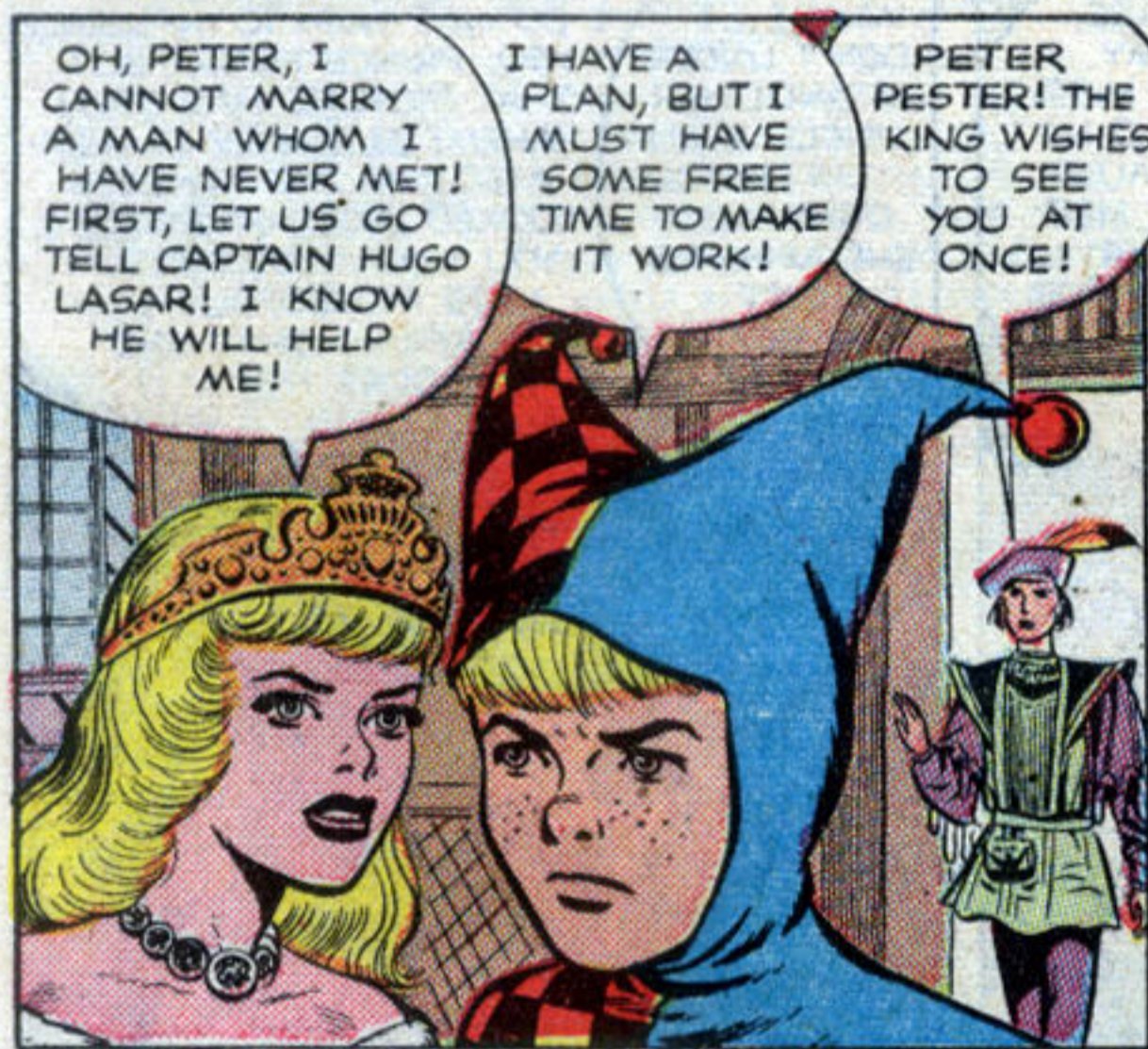
THIS IS TERRIBLE! WE WILL HAVE TO TELL THE PRINCESS AT ONCE!



WE THOUGHT YOU OUGHT TO SEE THIS, PRINCESS DENISE, BUT PLEASE DO NOT TELL KING ROLLY WHERE YOU GOT IT!

OH, HOW AWFUL! I DON'T WANT TO MARRY PRINCE HENRY! **WHAT SHALL I DO?**

THIS IS A PROBLEM!



OH, PETER, I CANNOT MARRY A MAN WHOM I HAVE NEVER MET! FIRST, LET US GO TELL CAPTAIN HUGO LASAR! I KNOW HE WILL HELP ME!

I HAVE A PLAN, BUT I MUST HAVE SOME FREE TIME TO MAKE IT WORK!

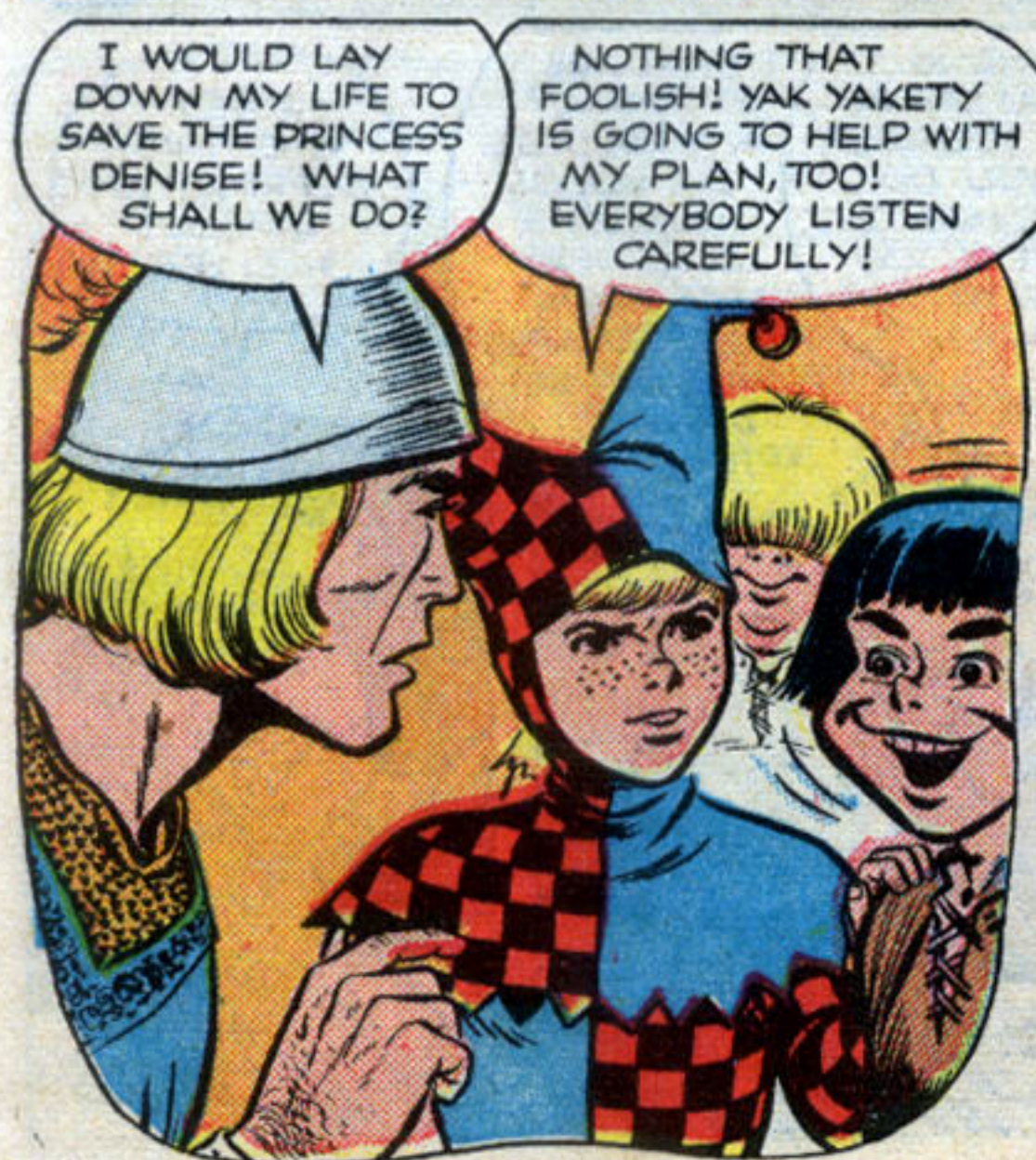
PETER PESTER! THE KING WISHES TO SEE YOU AT ONCE!



KING ROLLY WISHES YOU TO BE FUNNY! HE SAYS THAT YOU HAVE NOT MADE HIM LAUGH SINCE HE APPOINTED YOU HIS JESTER!

I COULD IF I HAD THE PRIVILEGES THAT YOU ALLOWED YOUR FORMER JESTER! HE WENT TO PARIS FOR NEW MATERIAL, MET PEOPLE, AND LEARNED MANY STORIES!

VERY WELL, YOU MAY GO TO PARIS, TOO! FOR THREE DAYS!



I WOULD LAY DOWN MY LIFE TO SAVE THE PRINCESS DENISE! WHAT SHALL WE DO?

NOTHING THAT FOOLISH! YAK YAKETY IS GOING TO HELP WITH MY PLAN, TOO! EVERYBODY LISTEN CAREFULLY!

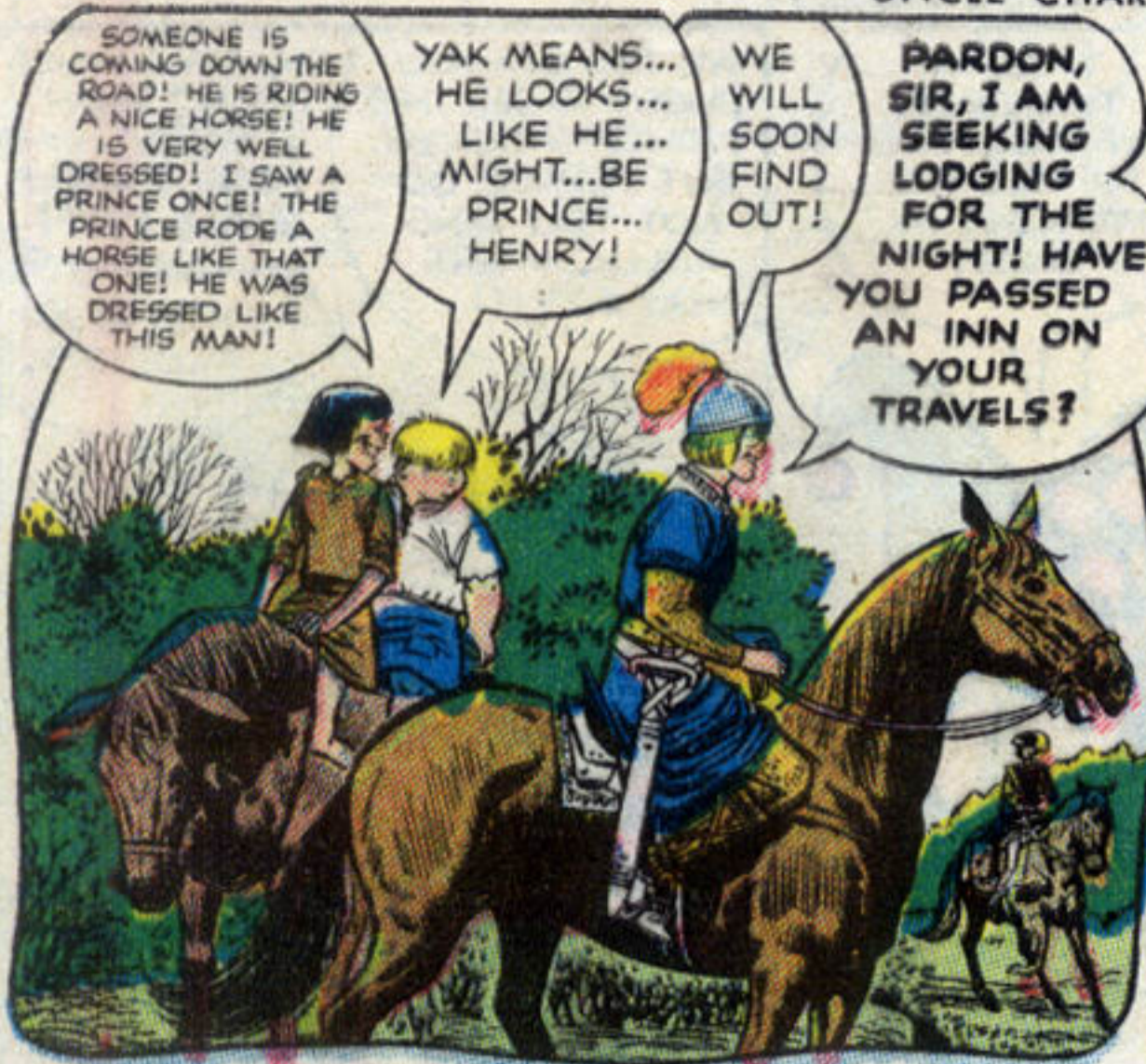


I'D BETTER BE GOING! PRINCE HENRY MUST BE ENTERING THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE KINGDOM BY NOW!

EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT FINE IF YOU CAN KEEP YAK YAKETY FROM OVERDOING IT!

HUGO, POKEY AND ME ARE GOING TO MEET PRINCE HENRY! NO ONE WILL KNOW WHAT WE ARE DOING! I AM NOT SURE WHAT WE ARE DOING MYSELF, BUT IT WILL BE FUN!

HE MEANS... EVERYTHING WILL... BE ALL RIGHT, GINGER!



SOMEONE IS COMING DOWN THE ROAD! HE IS RIDING A NICE HORSE! HE IS VERY WELL DRESSED! I SAW A PRINCE ONCE! THE PRINCE RODE A HORSE LIKE THAT ONE! HE WAS DRESSED LIKE THIS MAN!

YAK MEANS... HE LOOKS... LIKE HE... MIGHT... BE PRINCE... HENRY!

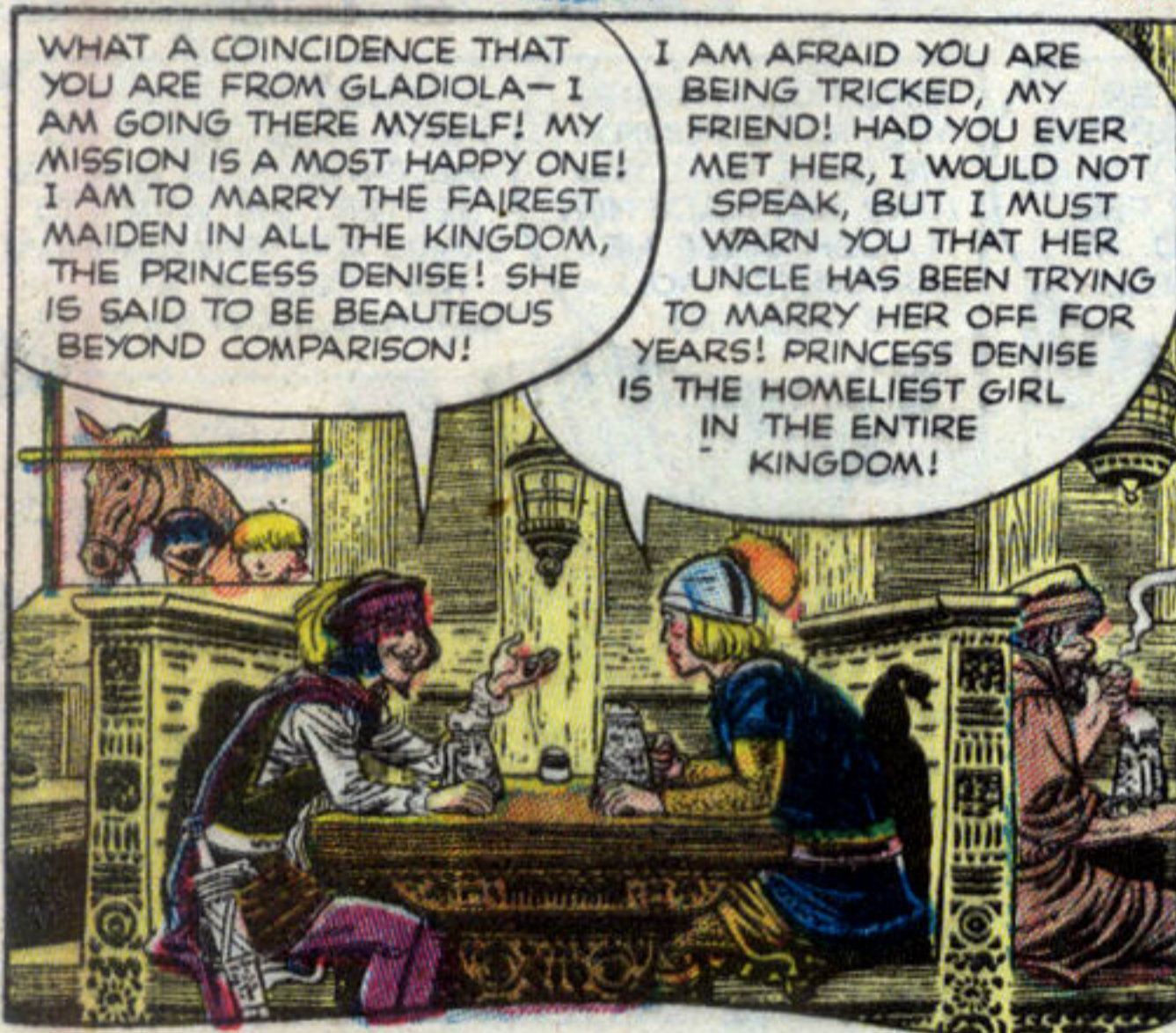
WE WILL SOON FIND OUT!

PARDON, SIR, I AM SEEKING LODGING FOR THE NIGHT! HAVE YOU PASSED AN INN ON YOUR TRAVELS?



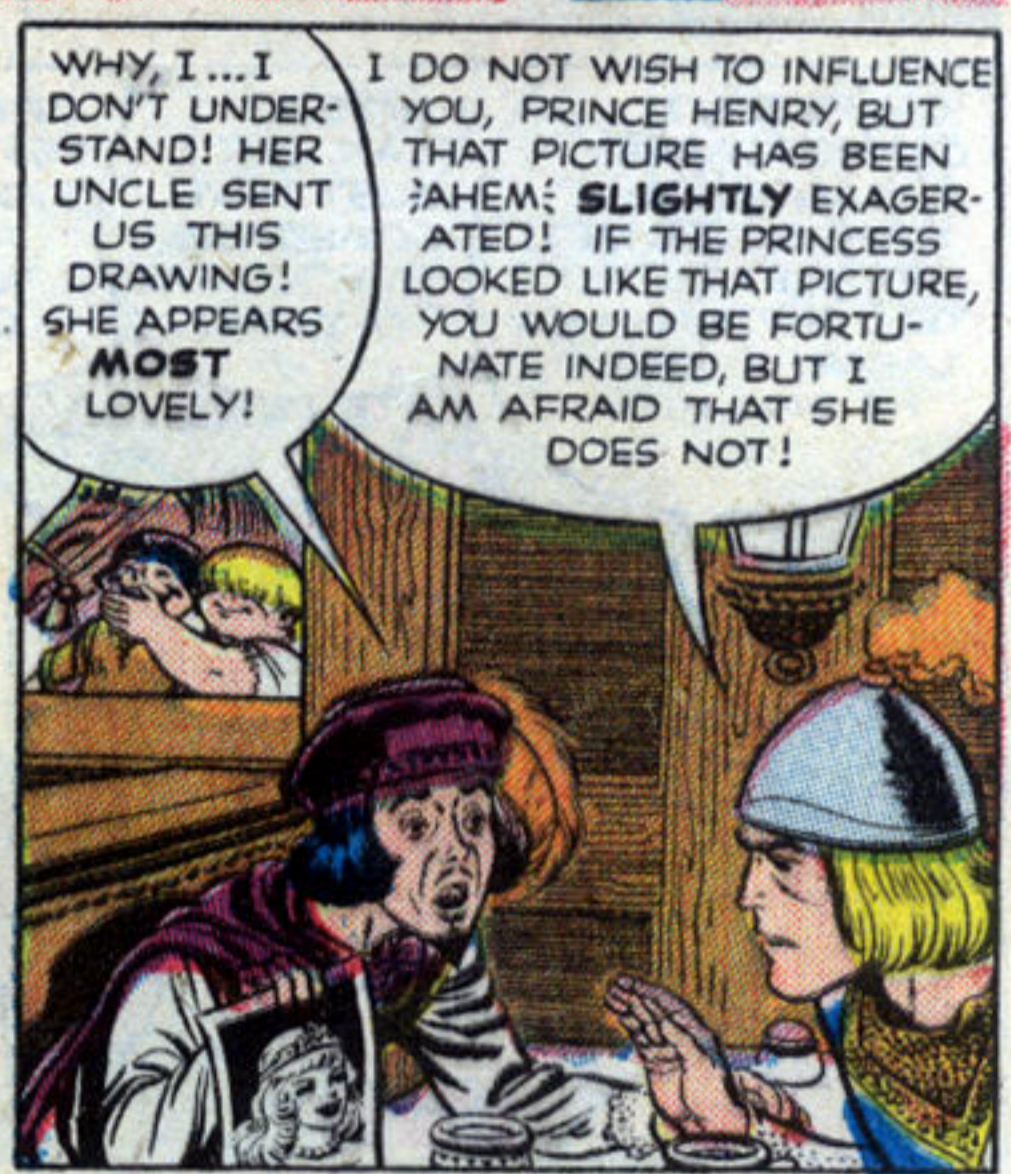
WHY, YES, INDEED! I JUST PASSED A SPLENDID INN, BUT A QUARTER MILE BACK! COME, I WILL SHOW YOU!

THAT IS VERY KIND OF YOU, SIR! I WOULD BE HONORED IF YOU WOULD JOIN ME IN A GROG OR TWO!



WHAT A COINCIDENCE THAT YOU ARE FROM GLADIOLA— I AM GOING THERE MYSELF! MY MISSION IS A MOST HAPPY ONE! I AM TO MARRY THE FAIREST MAIDEN IN ALL THE KINGDOM, THE PRINCESS DENISE! SHE IS SAID TO BE BEAUTEOUS BEYOND COMPARISON!

I AM AFRAID YOU ARE BEING TRICKED, MY FRIEND! HAD YOU EVER MET HER, I WOULD NOT SPEAK, BUT I MUST WARN YOU THAT HER UNCLE HAS BEEN TRYING TO MARRY HER OFF FOR YEARS! PRINCESS DENISE IS THE HOMELIEST GIRL IN THE ENTIRE KINGDOM!



WHY, I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND! HER UNCLE SENT US THIS DRAWING! SHE APPEARS MOST LOVELY!

I DO NOT WISH TO INFLUENCE YOU, PRINCE HENRY, BUT THAT PICTURE HAS BEEN ~~HAHEM~~ SLIGHTLY EXAGGERATED! IF THE PRINCESS LOOKED LIKE THAT PICTURE, YOU WOULD BE FORTUNATE INDEED, BUT I AM AFRAID THAT SHE DOES NOT!



YOU HAVE ALARMED ME GREATLY, SIR HUGO! PERHAPS I HAVE BEEN HASTY! IF THERE WAS ONLY SOME WAY THAT I COULD SEE HER BEFORE THE MARRIAGE...

I CAN HELP YOU, PRINCE HENRY! SHE WILL BE IN HER PRIVATE GARDEN NOW! I COULD TAKE YOU THERE! FINISH YOUR ALE, AND WE WILL GO!

YOU HEARD HIM! YAK! LET'S GO!



THERE SHE IS NOW! YOU CAN INTRODUCE YOURSELF, AND IF YOU DO NOT LIKE HER, IT WILL NOT BE TOO LATE TO ESCAPE!

I SHALL BE ETERNALLY IN YOUR DEBT, SIR HUGO! HMM... SHE LOOKS VERY NICE FROM HERE! PERHAPS IT WILL NOT BE SO BAD AFTER ALL!



GUESS WHO THIS IS, PRINCESS DENISE! HEE! HEE!



PRINCE HENRY, MY LOVE! I THOUGHT YOU WOULD NEVER COME! LONG HAVE I WAITED YOUR WARM EMBRACE! I HAVE DREAMED OF YOU THROUGH THE LONG NIGHTS! COME TO ME, HENRY! CRUSH ME IN YOUR ARMS!



BUT... I... ER... BUT PRINCESS! WE HAVE HARDLY MET!

HOLD ME TO YOUR MANLY CHEST, MY BELOVED! COME SIT WITH ME ON YONDER BENCH AND WHISPER SWEET NOTHINGS IN MY EAR! IF YOU ARE SWEET AND KIND, I MAY LET YOU KISS ME!



DEAREST, ARE YOU LEAVING ME? WE HAVE ONLY JUST MET, MY LOVED ONE! I CANNOT BEAR TO LOSE YOU—DO NOT GO! I BEG OF YOU! DO YOU NOT LOVE ME, HENRY?

I... ER... I'M NOT SURE WE ARE MEANT FOR EACH OTHER, PRINCESS! PERHAPS WE SHOULD THINK THIS OVER... WE DO NOT WANT TO RUSH INTO ANYTHING! PERHAPS WE SHALL MEET AGAIN!



Meanwhile, inside the palace...

HIS EMINENCE, PRINCE HENRY, OF MARITANA!

WELCOME, MY BOY! MY COURT WILL BE JOYED TO HEAR OF YOUR ARRIVAL!

MY DISGUISE HAS FOOLED THEM ALL SO FAR!



THANK YOU, KING ROLLY! SO YOUR BROTHER OUTSMARTED YOU AND STOLE YOUR JESTER! I'VE HEARD A LOT ABOUT YOUR NEW ONE, THOUGH—HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE EVEN BETTER! WHAT DO YOU PAY HIM?

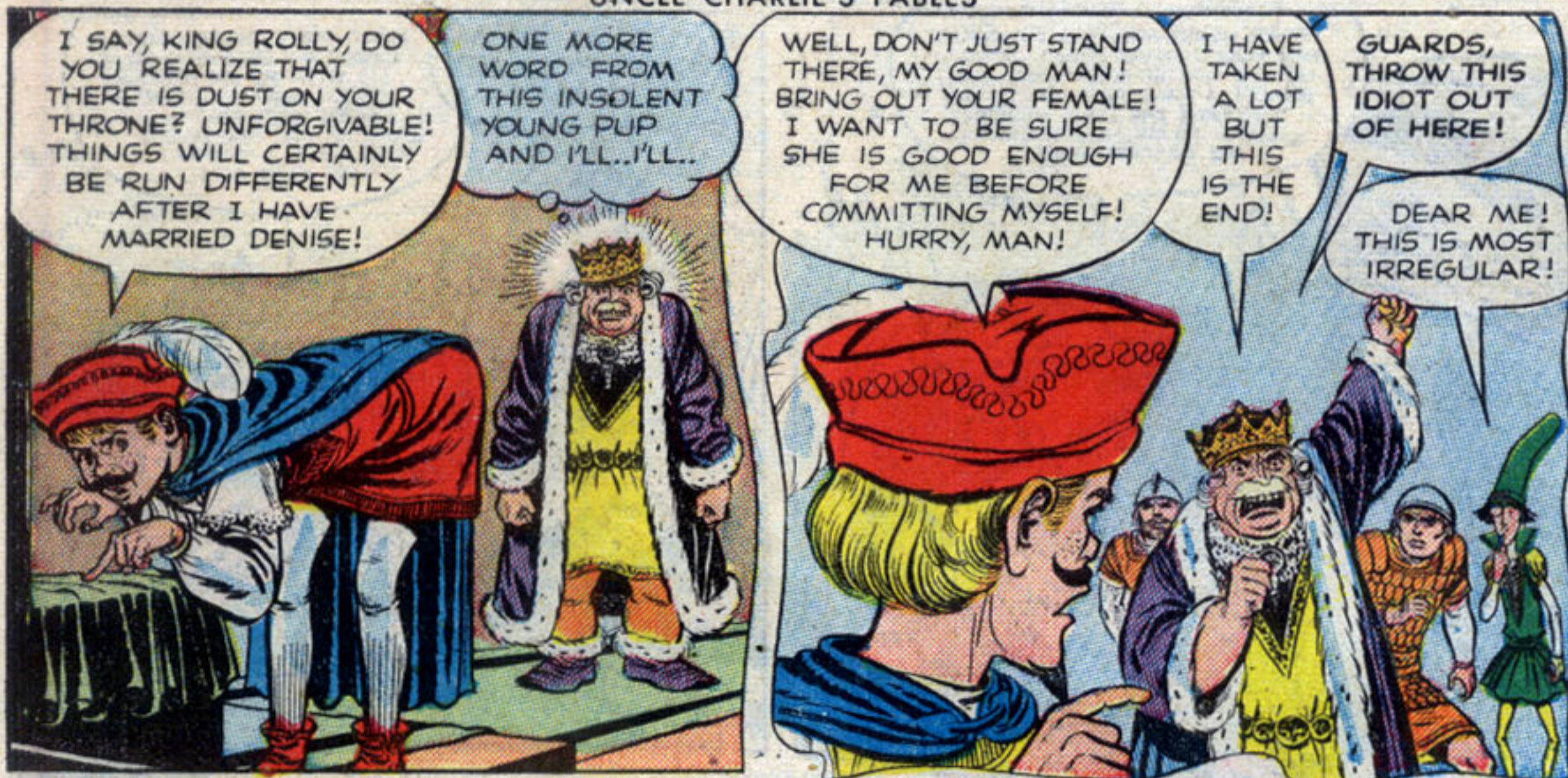
A NERVY LAD, I MUST SAY! I'D BETTER MAKE THE FIGURE HIGH!

I PAY HIM 250 GOLD PIECES A WEEK, AND HE'S WORTH EVERY BIT OF IT! CONFIDENTIALLY, I WAS TRYING TO THINK OF SOME EXCUSE TO FIRE MY OTHER JESTER, ANYWAY!



HMM, YOUR CASTLE LOOKS A LITTLE RUNDOWN! I'M AFRAID YOU AREN'T STRICT ENOUGH WITH YOUR STAFF! I'LL CHANGE ALL THAT, OF COURSE! ANOTHER THING, ROLLY, I DON'T FEEL THAT YOUR PEOPLE HAVE SHOWN ME THE PROPER RESPECT! TRUE, THEY DO NOT KNOW ME YET, BUT THEY SHOULD RECOGNIZE MY REGAL BEARING AND GIVE ME THE HONOR IT DESERVES!

WHY, UH, I AM SORRY TO HEAR THAT, PRINCE HENRY! I SHALL CERTAINLY SEE THAT YOU ARE TREATED AS YOU DESERVE FROM NOW ON!



I SAY, KING ROLLY, DO YOU REALIZE THAT THERE IS DUST ON YOUR THRONE? UNFORGIVABLE! THINGS WILL CERTAINLY BE RUN DIFFERENTLY AFTER I HAVE MARRIED DENISE!

ONE MORE WORD FROM THIS INSOLENT YOUNG PUP AND I'LL...I'LL...

WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE, MY GOOD MAN! BRING OUT YOUR FEMALE! I WANT TO BE SURE SHE IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME BEFORE COMMITTING MYSELF! HURRY, MAN!

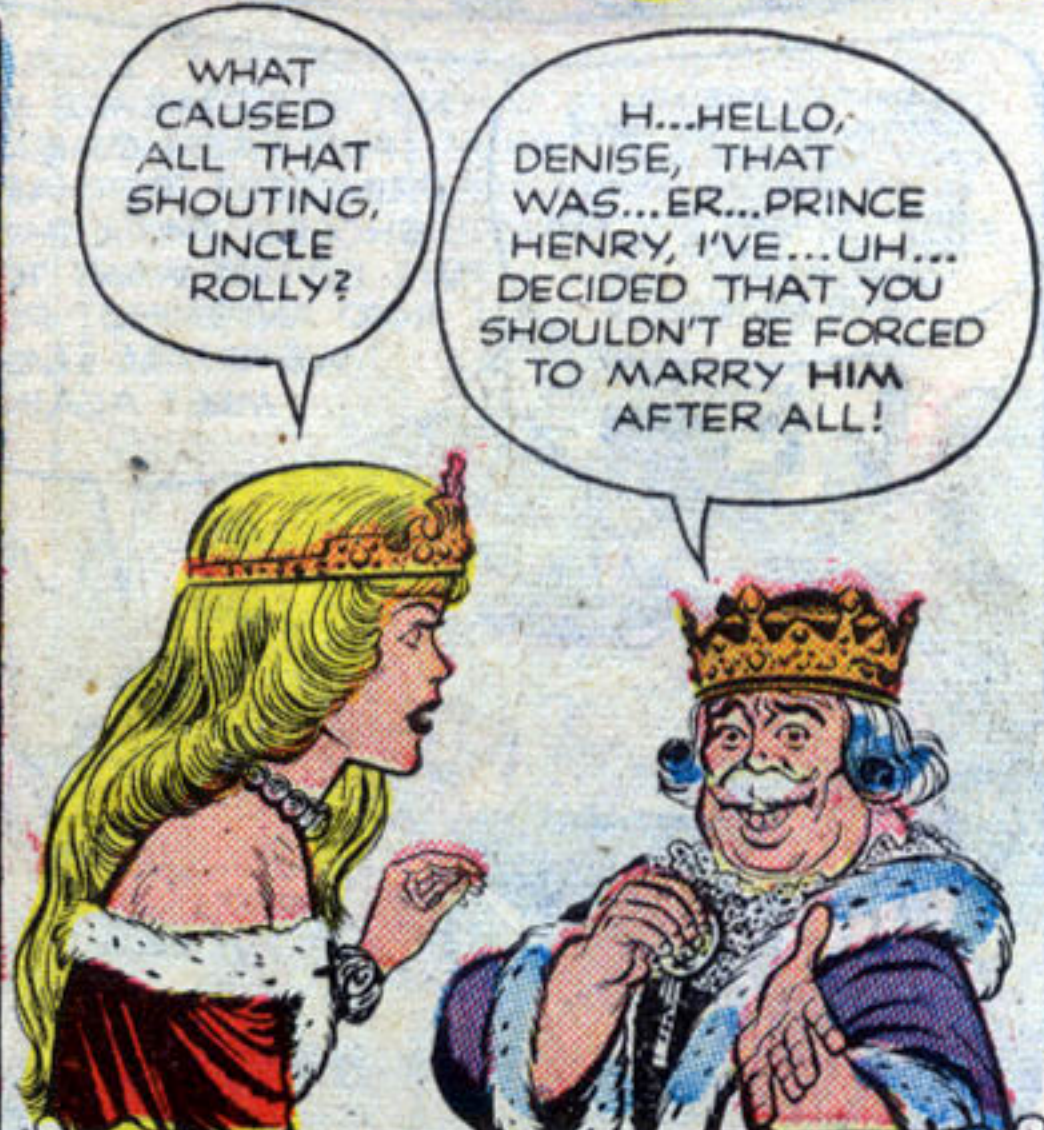
I HAVE TAKEN A LOT BUT THIS IS THE END!

GUARDS, THROW THIS IDIOT OUT OF HERE!

DEAR ME! THIS IS MOST IRREGULAR!

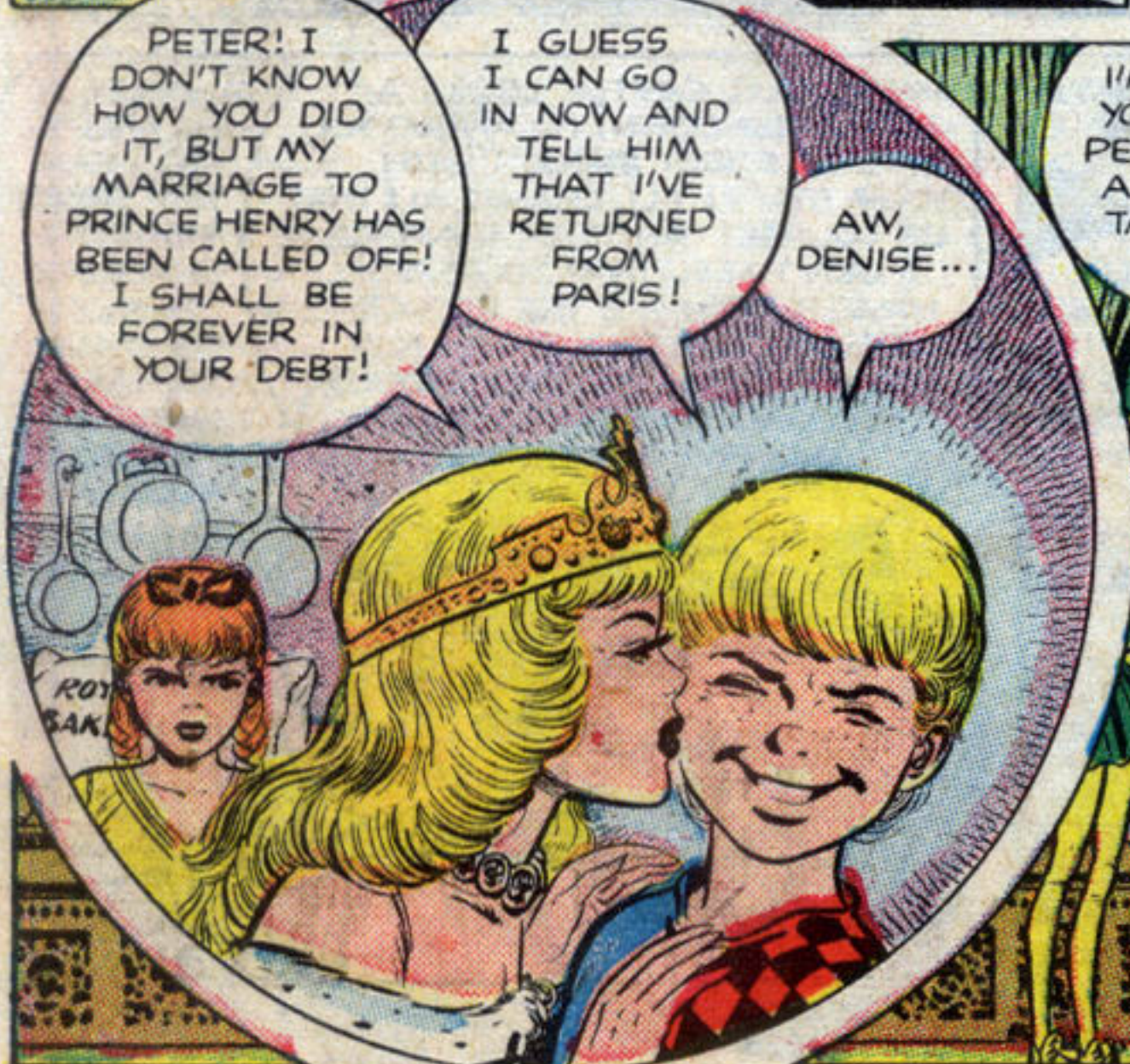


IF I SEE YOUR FACE AROUND HERE AGAIN, I'LL SET THE DOGS ON YOU! I SHOULD DECLARE WAR ON YOUR COUNTRY!



WHAT CAUSED ALL THAT SHOUTING, UNCLE ROLLY?

H...HELLO, DENISE, THAT WAS...ER...PRINCE HENRY, I'VE...UH... DECIDED THAT YOU SHOULDN'T BE FORCED TO MARRY HIM AFTER ALL!



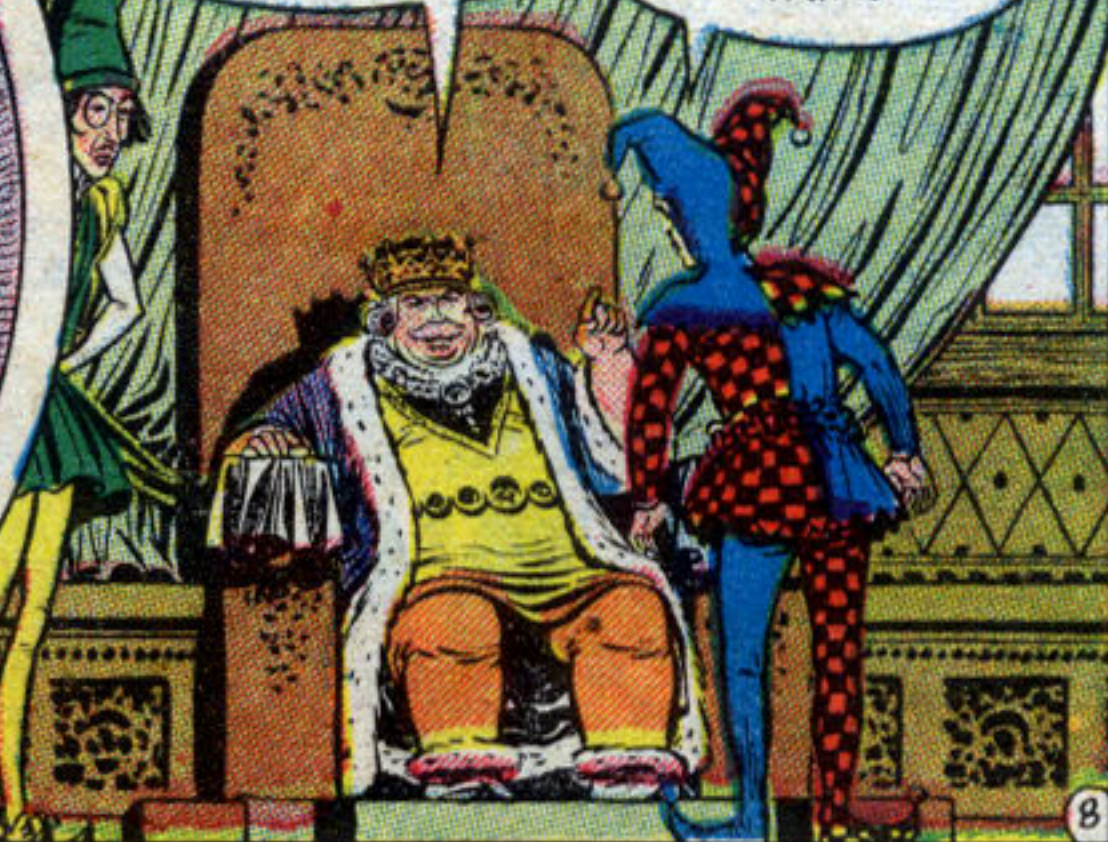
PETER! I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU DID IT, BUT MY MARRIAGE TO PRINCE HENRY HAS BEEN CALLED OFF! I SHALL BE FOREVER IN YOUR DEBT!

I GUESS I CAN GO IN NOW AND TELL HIM THAT I'VE RETURNED FROM PARIS!

AW, DENISE...

I'M GLAD TO SEE THAT YOU ARE BACK FROM PARIS, PETER! WELL, DID YOU FIND ANY NEW JOKES? I CERTAINLY HOPE SO—I'M IN THE MOOD FOR A GOOD LAUGH!

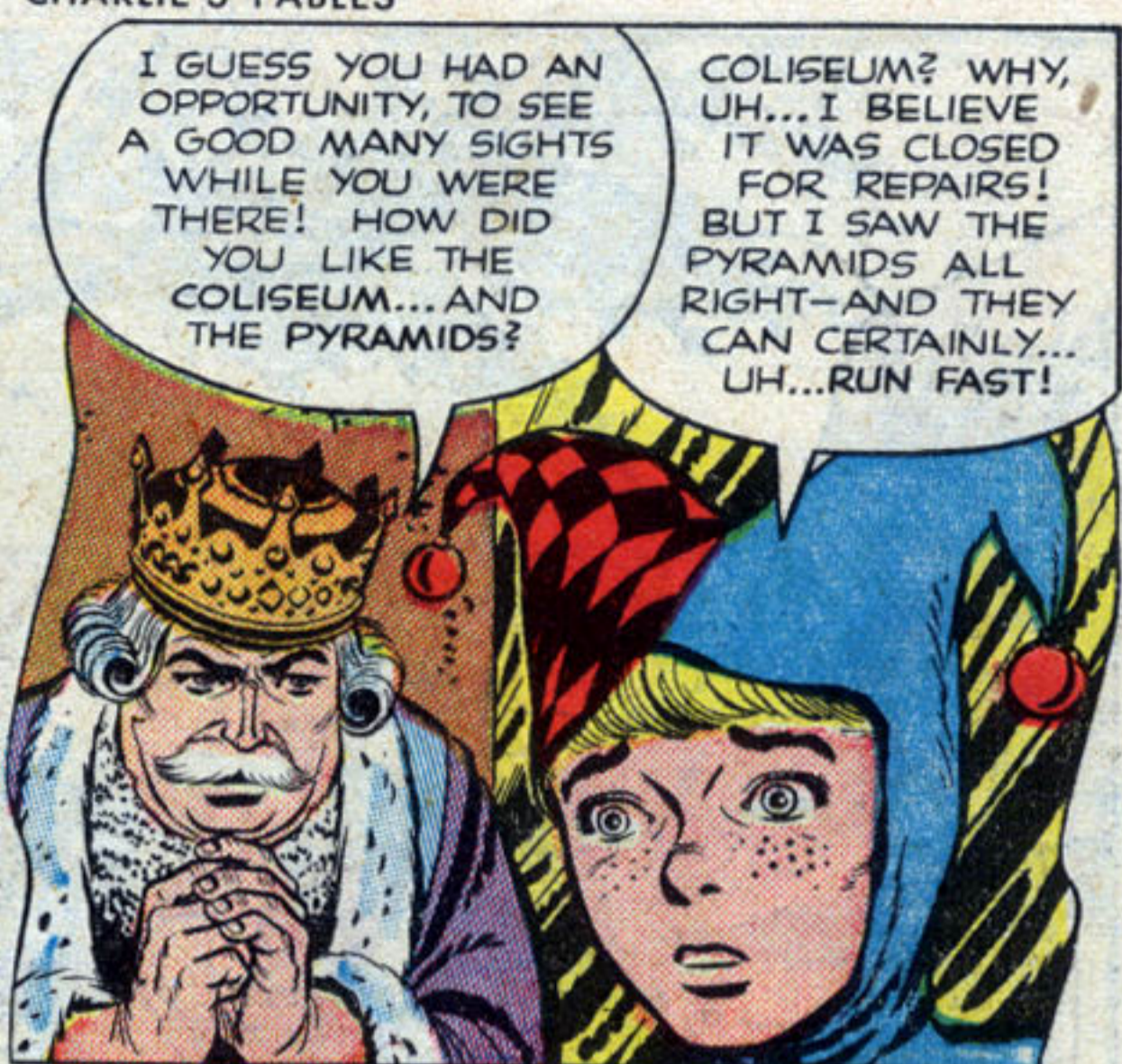
WHY, I...ER... CERTAINLY DID PICK UP A LOT, YOUR MAJESTY! YES, INDEED! IT WAS SURELY A WORTHWHILE TRIP!





DID YOU HAVE ANY DIFFICULTY WITH THEIR LANGUAGE?

LANGUAGE? WHY, UH... NO... NOT ALL ALL! THEY ALL SPOKE VERY CLEARLY! AND THEY TREATED ME, LIKE A PRINCE, KING ROLLY!



I GUESS YOU HAD AN OPPORTUNITY, TO SEE A GOOD MANY SIGHTS WHILE YOU WERE THERE! HOW DID YOU LIKE THE COLISEUM... AND THE PYRAMIDS?

COLISEUM? WHY, UH... I BELIEVE IT WAS CLOSED FOR REPAIRS! BUT I SAW THE PYRAMIDS ALL RIGHT-AND THEY CAN CERTAINLY... UH...RUN FAST!



THAT PROVES IT! YOU WEREN'T THERE AT ALL! WAIT A MINUTE! IT'S BECOMING VERY CLEAR! I THOUGHT THAT VOICE SOUNDED FAMILIAR-THAT WAS YOU, POSING AS PRINCE HENRY! WHAT HAPPENED TO PRINCE HENRY?

UH...I TOLD HIM THAT WE WERE HAVING A SMALL-POX EPIDEMIC AND EVERYONE WAS DYING LIKE FLIES! HE TURNED AROUND AND RAN FOR HOME!



I WILL HAVE YOU THROWN IN IRONS! DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU HAVE DONE? THE KING OF MARITANIA WILL THINK I DID THIS ON PURPOSE! YOU...YOU...

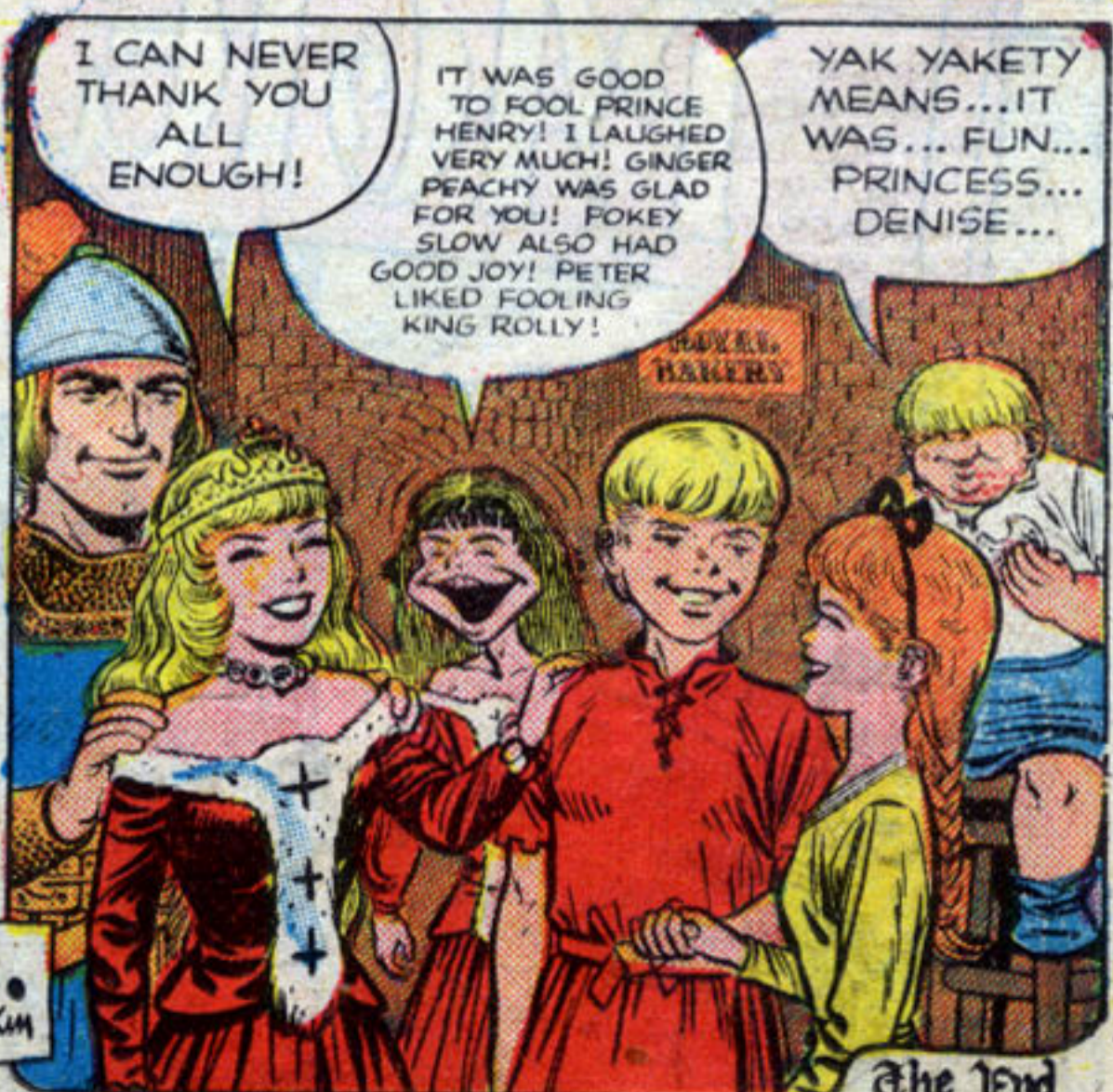
WAIT, UNCLE ROLLY! I ASKED PETER TO DO IT! YOU WOULDN'T REALLY WANT ME TO MARRY A MAN I'D NEVER MET-YOU'RE TOO GOOD AND KIND TO DO A CRUEL THING LIKE THAT!



AH, PERHAPS YOU ARE RIGHT, DENISE! HOWEVER, I STILL REFUSE TO LET YOU THROW YOURSELF AWAY ON A MERE KNIGHT! YOU MUST MARRY SOMEONE OF ROYAL BLOOD!

WELL GET BACK TO THE BAKERY, PESTER! YOU ARE FIRED AS MY JESTER!

I'M LEAVING, YOUR MAJESTY!



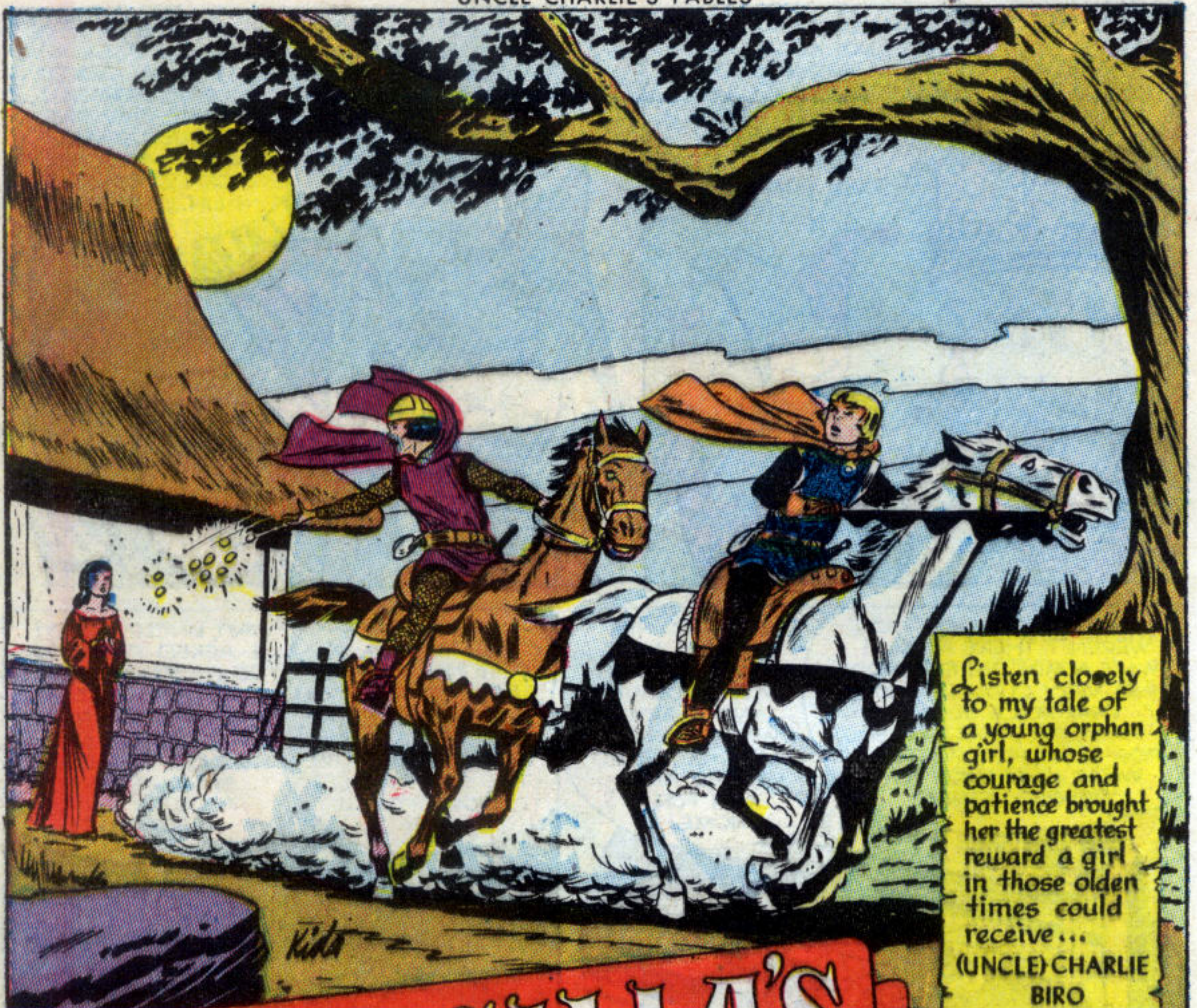
I CAN NEVER THANK YOU ALL ENOUGH!

IT WAS GOOD TO FOOL PRINCE HENRY! I LAUGHED VERY MUCH! GINGER PEACHY WAS GLAD FOR YOU! FOKEY SLOW ALSO HAD GOOD JOY! PETER LIKED FOOLING KING ROLLY!

YAK YAKETY MEANS...IT WAS... FUN... PRINCESS... DENISE...

H. Mankin

The End

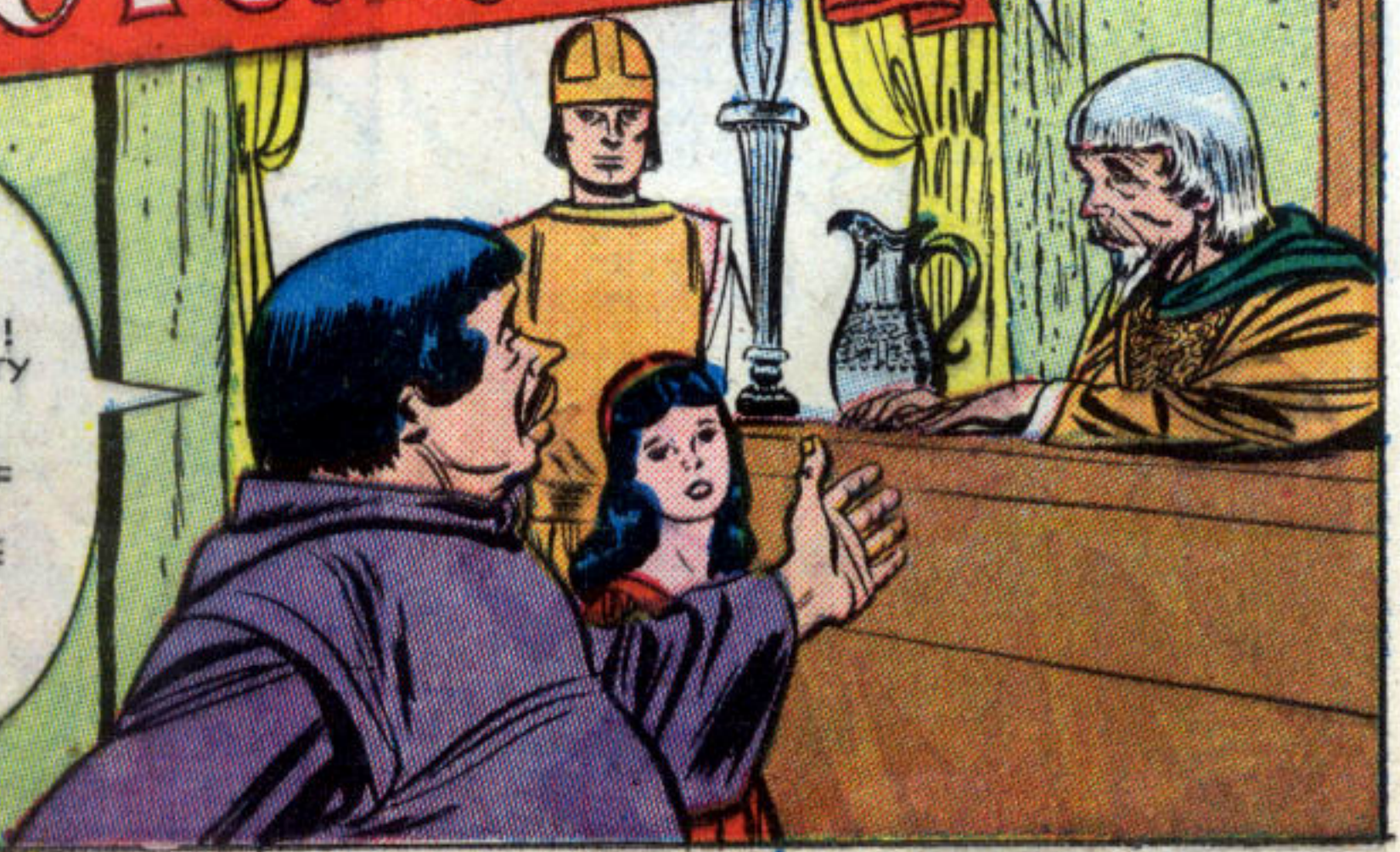


Listen closely to my tale of a young orphan girl, whose courage and patience brought her the greatest reward a girl in those olden times could receive...
 (UNCLE) CHARLIE BIRO

PRISCILLA'S PATIENCE

WHAT DO YOU THINK, CHILD? IS THIS AGREEABLE?

YOUR HONOR, I AM THE ONLY LIVING KIN OF THIS ORPHAN GIRL WHO STANDS BEFORE YOU! I FEEL IT IS MY DUTY AS HER SECOND COUSIN TO ACCEPT THE GUARDIANSHIP OF HER UNTIL SHE IS OLD ENOUGH TO TAKE OVER THE OPERATING OF THE INN SHE INHERITED FROM HER POOR, OLD FATHER!



OH, YES, COUSIN OTTO IS SO KIND TO OFFER TO HELP ME! EXCEPT FOR HIM I HAVE NO BLOOD RELATION!

THEN HE SHALL BE YOUR GUARDIAN! I WILL SIGN THE PAPERS AT ONCE!

I SCARCELY KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU FOR BEING SO KIND TO ME, COUSIN OTTO! PLEASE LEND ME YOUR HAND!

GET DOWN YOURSELF! AND CARRY MY BAGS IN! NOW THAT I'M YOUR GUARDIAN, YOU WILL EARN YOUR KEEP!

The Dappled Horse Inn

NOW! SET THOSE BAGS IN THE CORNER AND BUILD A FIRE IN THE STOVE! I WISH YOU TO PREPARE MY SUPPER AT ONCE! AFTER YOU FINISH YOU CAN WASH MY SHIRTS AND SCRUB THE FLOORS!

AYE, OTTO SCORPI IS INDEED A SHARP LAD! HE'S SET HIMSELF UP AS GUARDIAN OF THAT GIRL COUSIN OF HIS WHO INHERITED THE DAPPLED HORSE INN AND NOW—HO, HO—HE'S ALL BUT TAKEN IT OVER!

THEN LET US BE OFF TO CONGRATULATE HIM AND DRINK A BIT OF HIS GROG!

HO! FILL UP MY MUG AGAIN, YOUNG WENCH!

THINGS HAVE GONE BADLY SINCE YOU'VE BEEN AWAY, OTTO! POOR PICKINGS, INDEED! SCARCELY A RICH TRAVELER IN MONTHS!

HUSH! WE WILL TALK OF THAT LATER! I THINK LUCK WILL CHANGE NOW THAT I HAVE THIS INN!

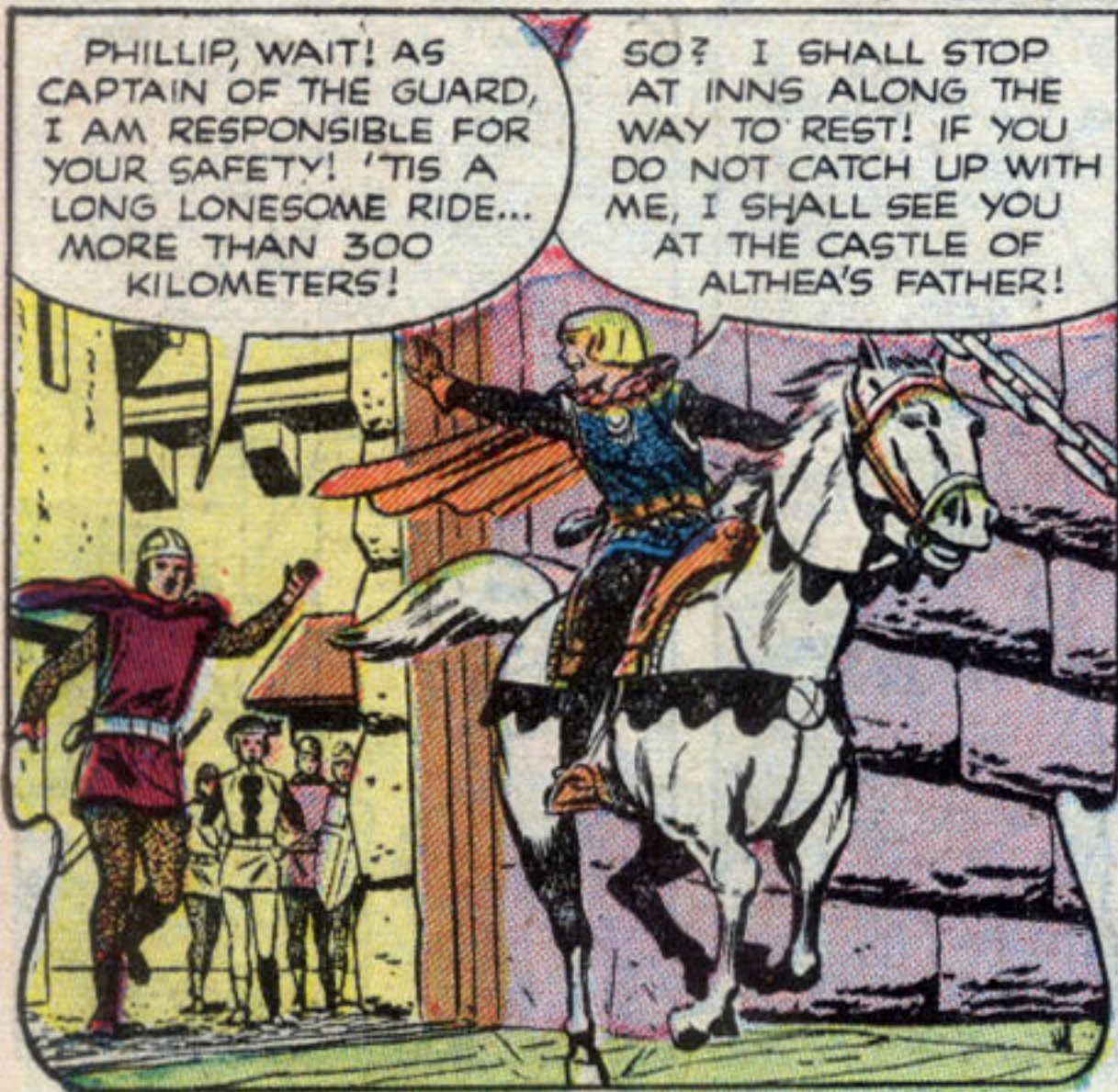
Meanwhile, at the palace of King Richard...

PHILLIP, MY SON, I CANNOT TELL YOU HOW HAPPY I AM THAT TOMORROW YOU WILL MARRY THE FAIR ALTHEA, THE DAUGHTER OF MY DEAREST FRIEND, THE DUKE OF ELWOOD! THOUGH YOU HAVE NEVER SEEN HER, I ASSURE YOU SHE IS BOTH RICH AND BEAUTIFUL!

I CAN SCARCELY WAIT TO BEHOLD HER FAIR FACE! INDEED I PLAN TO LEAVE WITHIN THE HOUR!

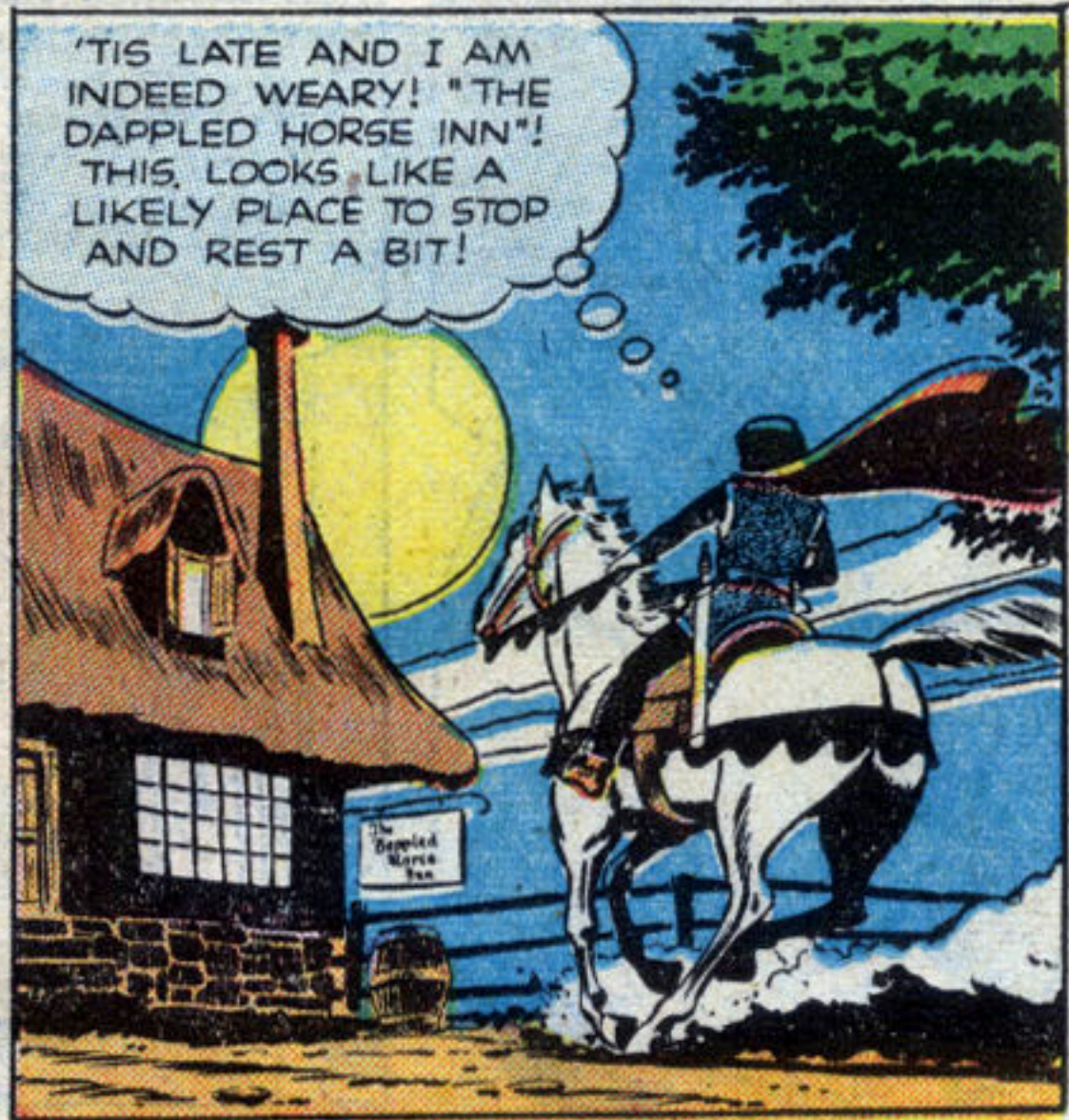
YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, MY MEN WHO ARE TO GUARD YOU, WILL NOT BE READY TO LEAVE FOR ANOTHER HOUR! I KNOW YOU ARE IMPATIENT, BUT FEAR NOT, WE WILL HAVE AMPLE TIME TO REACH THE DUKE'S CASTLE BEFORE MORNING!

I CANNOT WAIT! I AM TOO RESTLESS—TOO EAGER TO BE OFF! I SHALL GO ON AHEAD OF YOU!



PHILLIP, WAIT! AS CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD, I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR SAFETY! 'TIS A LONG LONESOME RIDE... MORE THAN 300 KILOMETERS!

SO? I SHALL STOP AT INNS ALONG THE WAY TO REST! IF YOU DO NOT CATCH UP WITH ME, I SHALL SEE YOU AT THE CASTLE OF ALTHEA'S FATHER!

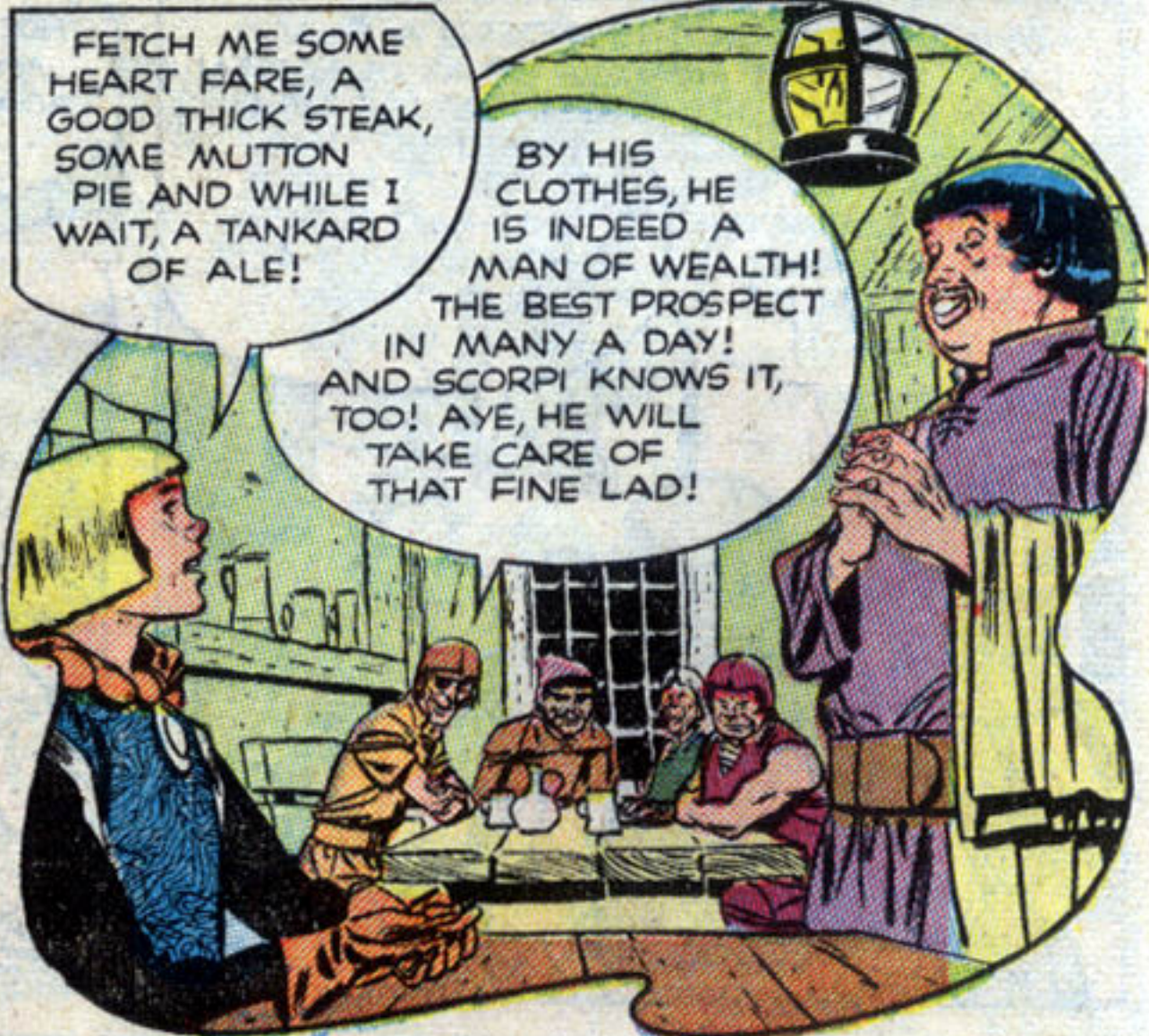


'TIS LATE AND I AM INDEED WEARY! "THE DAPPLED HORSE INN"! THIS LOOKS LIKE A LIKELY PLACE TO STOP AND REST A BIT!



AHH...WHAT A FINE, HANDSOME GENTLEMAN...

PRISCILLA, YOU LAZY, WORTHLESS CREATURE! A CUSTOMER JUST ARRIVED IN THE COURTYARD! MAKE HASTE! GO OUT AND STABLE HIS HORSE!



FETCH ME SOME HEART FARE, A GOOD THICK STEAK, SOME MUTTON PIE AND WHILE I WAIT, A TANKARD OF ALE!

BY HIS CLOTHES, HE IS INDEED A MAN OF WEALTH! THE BEST PROSPECT IN MANY A DAY! AND SCORPI KNOWS IT, TOO! AYE, HE WILL TAKE CARE OF THAT FINE LAD!



STRANGE... I FEEL SO TIRED...MY EYES GROW HEAVY... I...

AT LAST THE DRUG HAS HIM UNCONSCIOUS! CARRY HIM INTO THE DUNGEON BELOW! I CANNOT TRUST THAT STUPID GIRL TO KEEP SILENT SO WE CANNOT LET HER SEE US ROB HIM!



HIS GOLD WILL NOT MAKE US RICH! WE'LL HOLD HIM FOR RANSOM, TOO!

COUSIN OTTO! COUSIN OTTO-WHERE ARE YOU?

HURRY, WE MUST GO UP-STAIRS BEFORE PRISCILLA SUSPECTS THE TRUTH!



COUSIN, WHERE IS THE FINE GENTLEMAN? WHY LOOK, HE HAS SCARCELY TOUCHED HIS FOOD!

HE COULD NOT STAY! HE HAD TO LEAVE UNEXPECTEDLY!

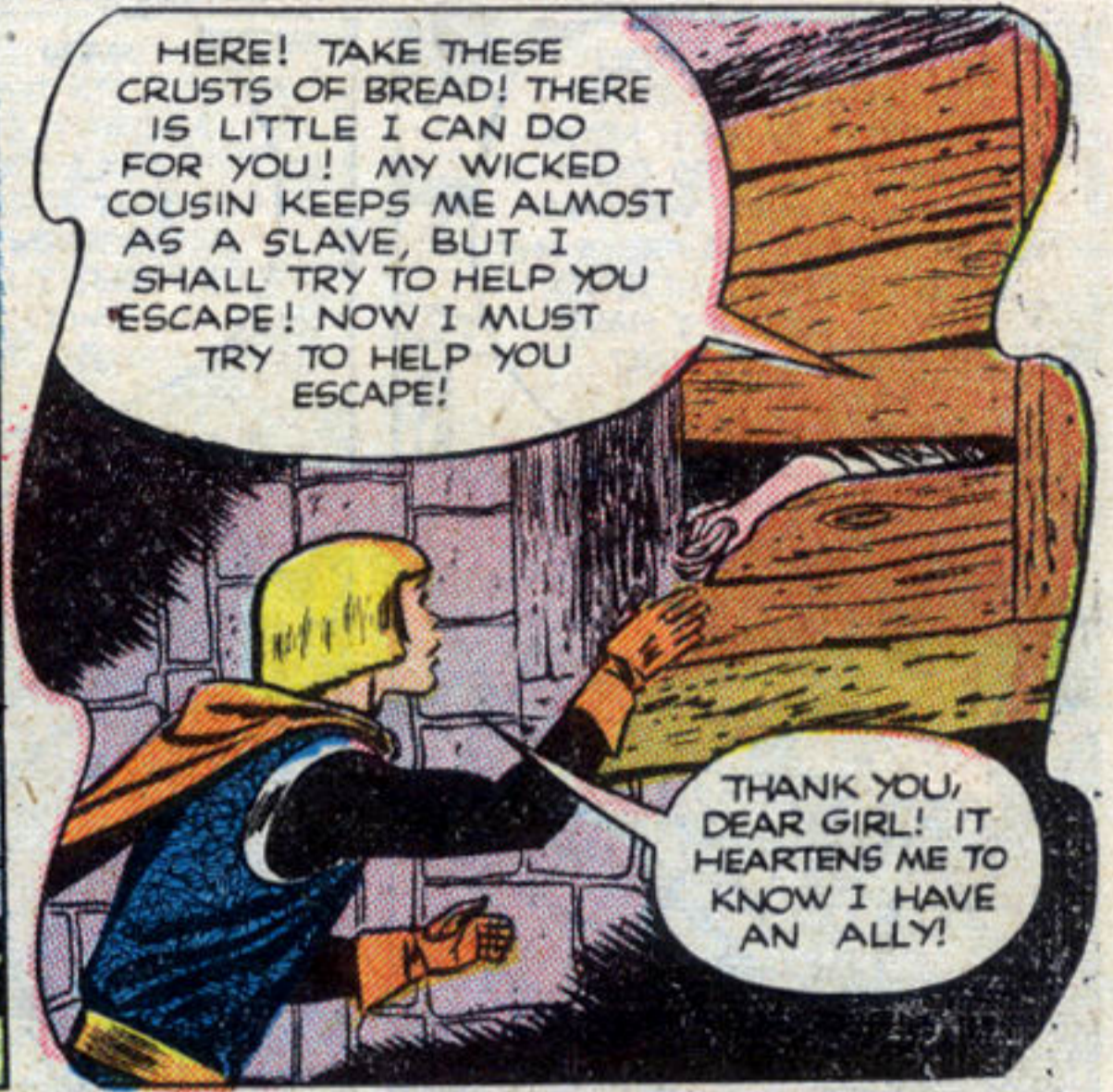
HE LIES! HIS HORSE IS STILL IN THE STABLE! I DO NOT TRUST OTTO OR HIS FRIENDS!



SIRE! IF YOU ARE IN THERE, SPEAK! I AM YOUR FRIEND AND WOULD HELP YOU!

WHERE ARE YOU? WHO ARE YOU?

I AM BY THE WINDOW! 'TIS BUT A CRACK! MY NAME IS PRISCILLA!

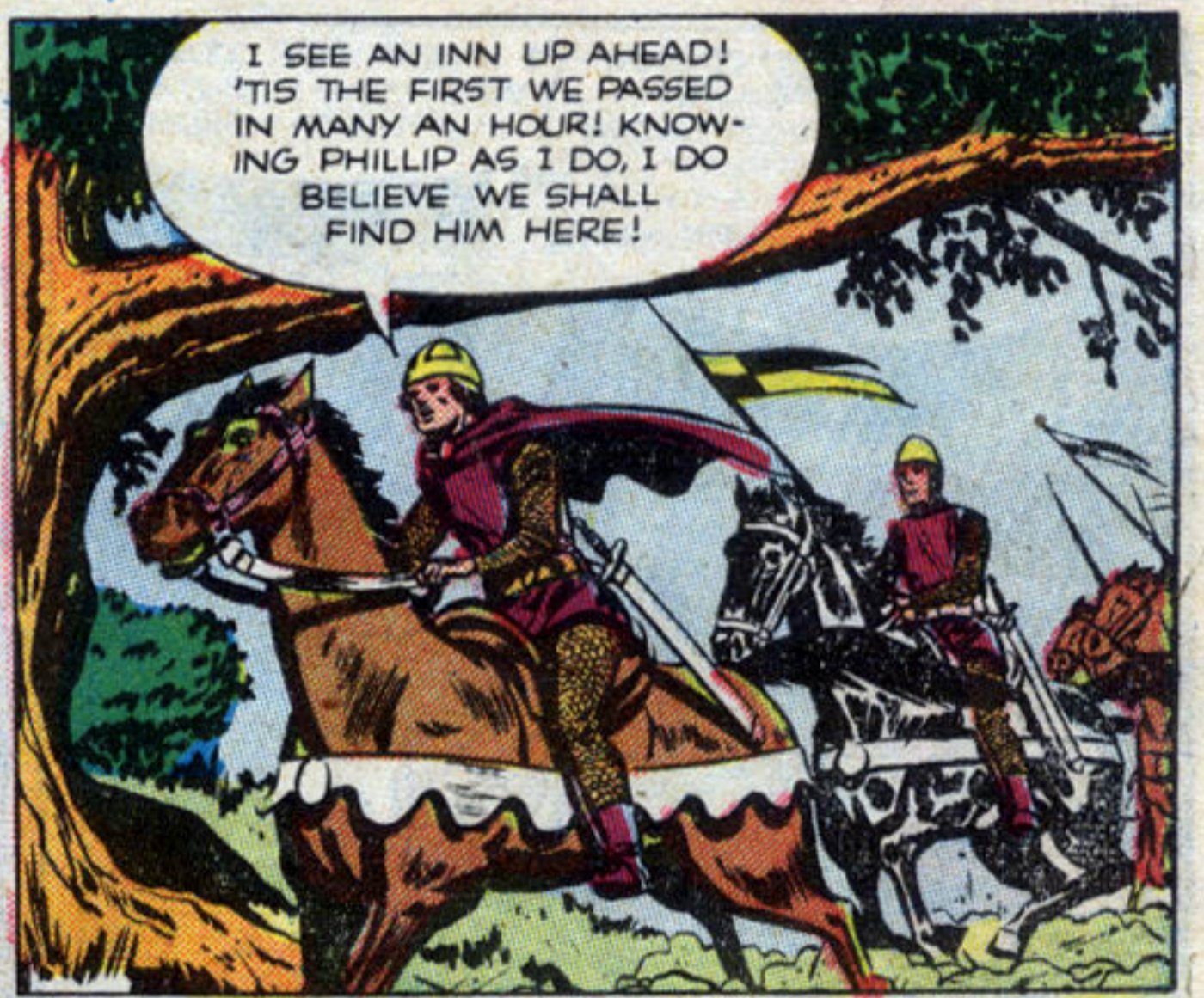


HERE! TAKE THESE CRUSTS OF BREAD! THERE IS LITTLE I CAN DO FOR YOU! MY WICKED COUSIN KEEPS ME ALMOST AS A SLAVE, BUT I SHALL TRY TO HELP YOU ESCAPE! NOW I MUST TRY TO HELP YOU ESCAPE!

THANK YOU, DEAR GIRL! IT HEARTENS ME TO KNOW I HAVE AN ALLY!



I MUST FIND A WAY TO SAVE HIM! HOW HANDSOME AND GENTLE HE IS! WHAT HAPPINESS I MIGHT HAVE IF HE WERE TO LOVE ME AS I LOVE HIM!



I SEE AN INN UP AHEAD! 'TIS THE FIRST WE PASSED IN MANY AN HOUR! KNOWING PHILLIP AS I DO, I DO BELIEVE WE SHALL FIND HIM HERE!



I AM SEEKING THE PRINCE! HE IS AS TALL AS I, BUT BLOND-A HANDSOME, WELL-KNIT LAD! HAS HE STOPPED HERE FOR FOOD AND REST?

P...PRINCE?? I...I WHY, NO! NO, INDEED! NO TRAVELERS HAVE STOPPED AT ALL TO-NIGHT! THE ONLY PATRONS AT THE INN ARE MEN FROM THE NEARBY VILLAGE!



WAIT! SIRE! I HEARD THEE ASK IF ANY-ONE HAD STOPPED HERE TONIGHT AND...

SILENCE! PAY NO ATTENTION TO HER, M' LORD! SHE REFERS TO AN OLD COBBLER WHO STOPPED HERE TO WATER HIS HORSE!

UNCLE CHARLIE'S FABLES



GET IN THERE, YOU MEDDLESOME BRAT! A PRINCE IS HE! NOW I SHALL HAVE TO DO AWAY WITH HIM! WE CAN NOT GET RANSOM FROM THE KING! I SHALL ATTEND TO YOU AFTER I HAVE FINISHED OFF THAT LAD IN THE DUNGEON!



MEN! RIDE ON TO THE DUKE'S CASTLE... I SHALL FOLLOW LATER, BUT FIRST I MUST RETURN TO THAT INN! I FEEL THAT PHILLIP MAY BE THERE!

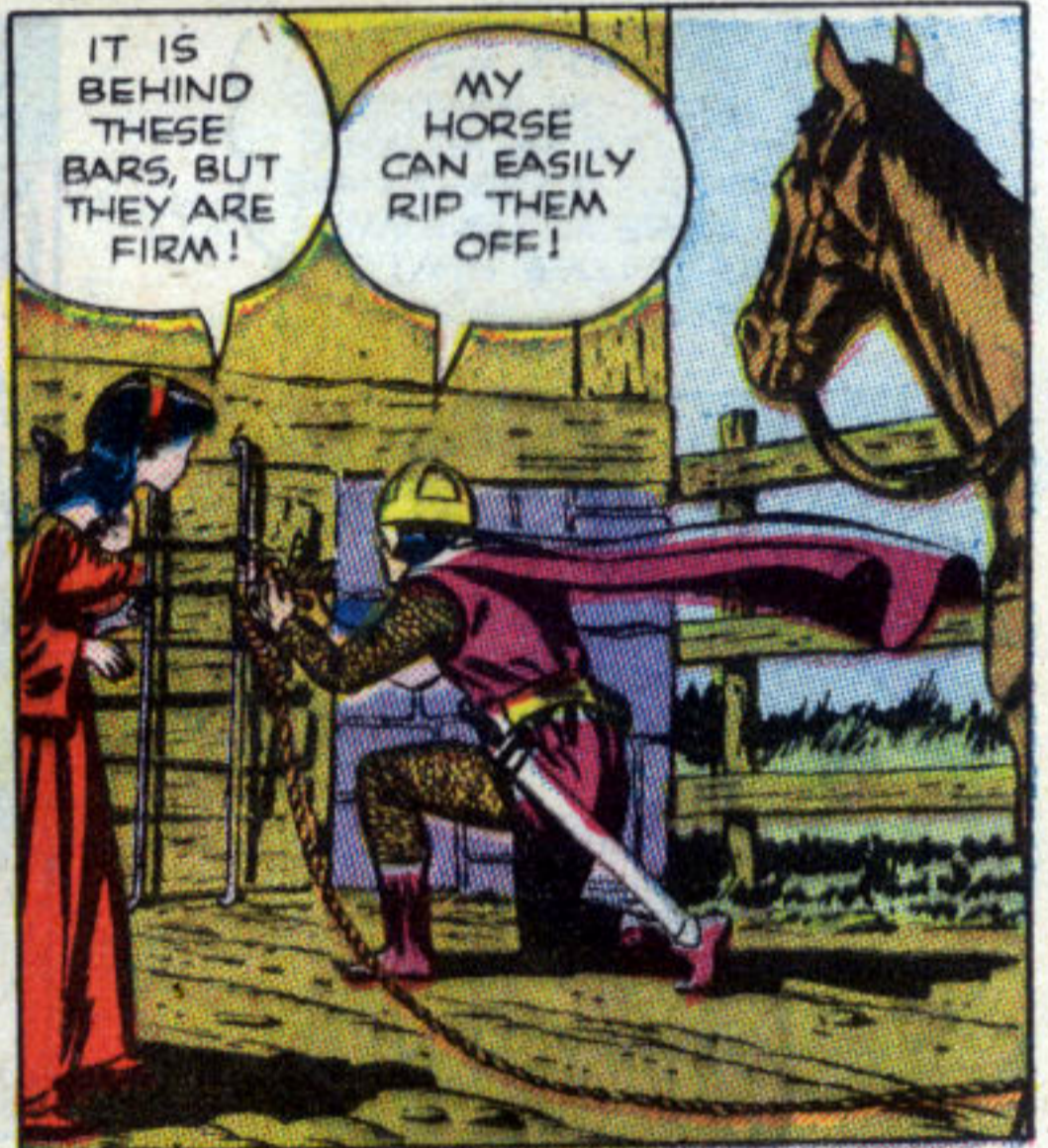


THAT KNIGHT IS COMING BACK! I MUST STOP HIM BEFORE HE REACHES THE COURTYARD!



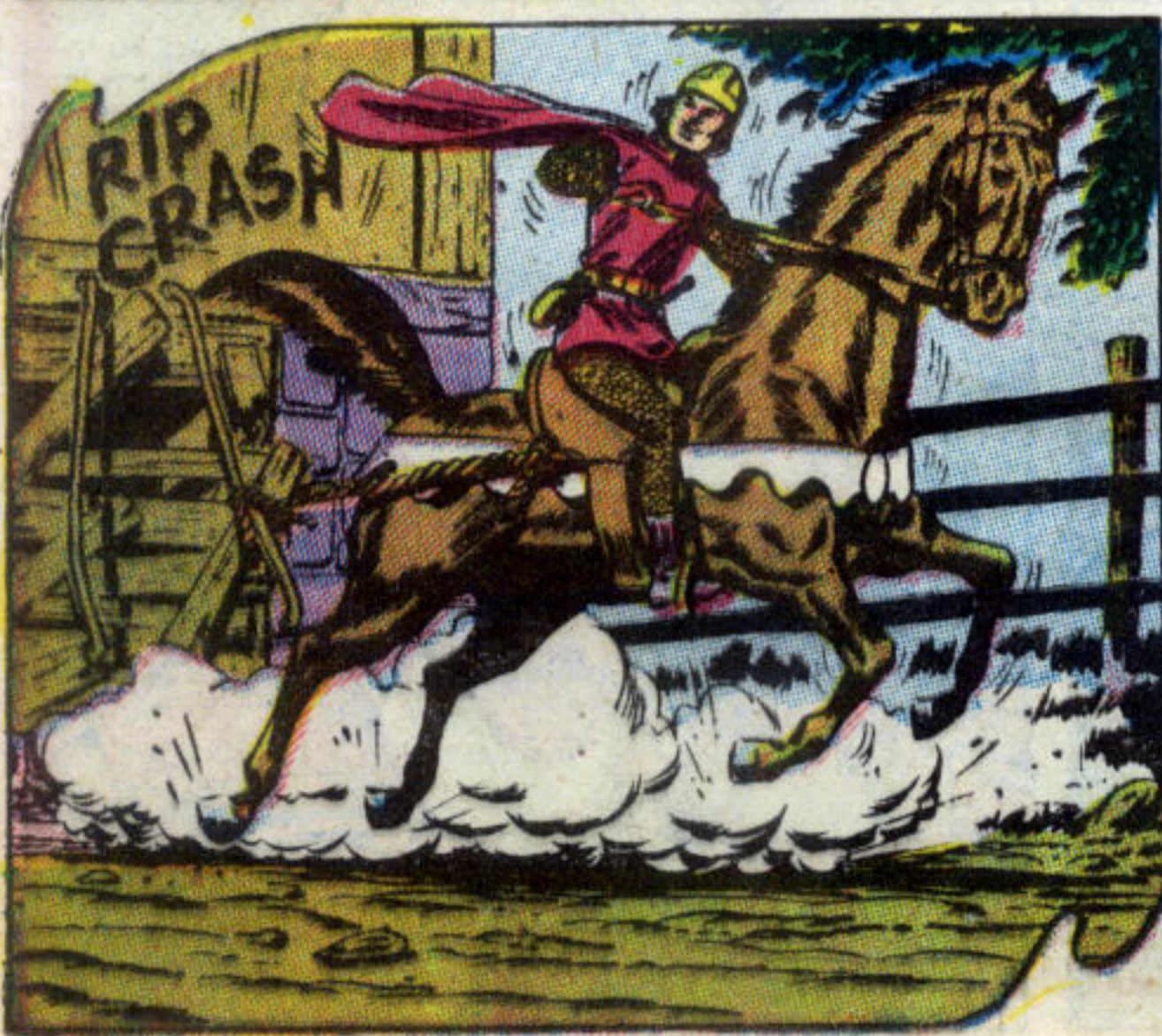
SIRE! MY WICKED COUSIN, OTTO, HAS THE PRINCE LOCKED IN A DUNGEON UNDER THE INN! ALAS, I FEAR FOR HIS LIFE! YOU MUST MAKE HASTE AND SAVE HIM!

I KNEW YOUR COUSIN WAS LYING! SHOW ME THIS DUNGEON!



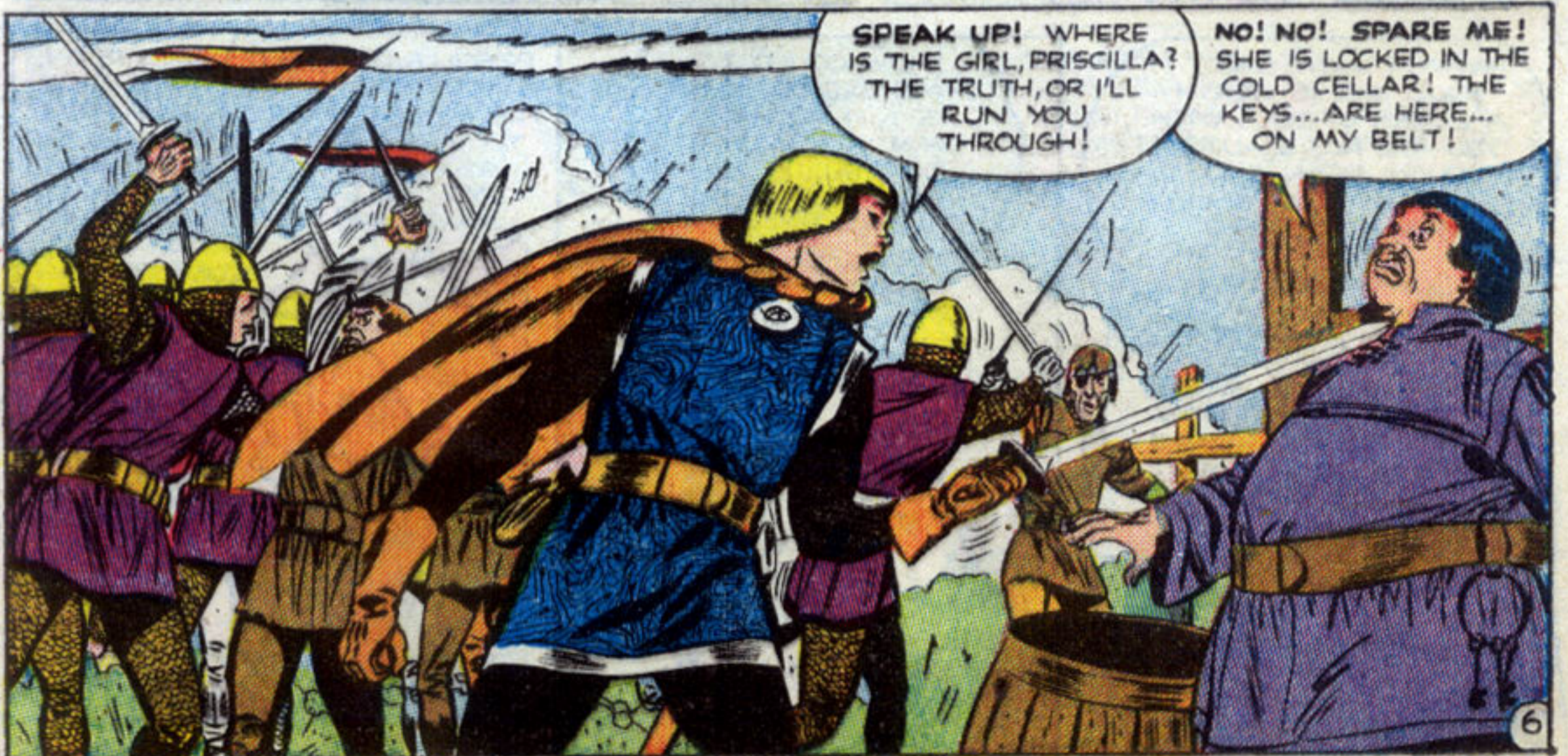
IT IS BEHIND THESE BARS, BUT THEY ARE FIRM!

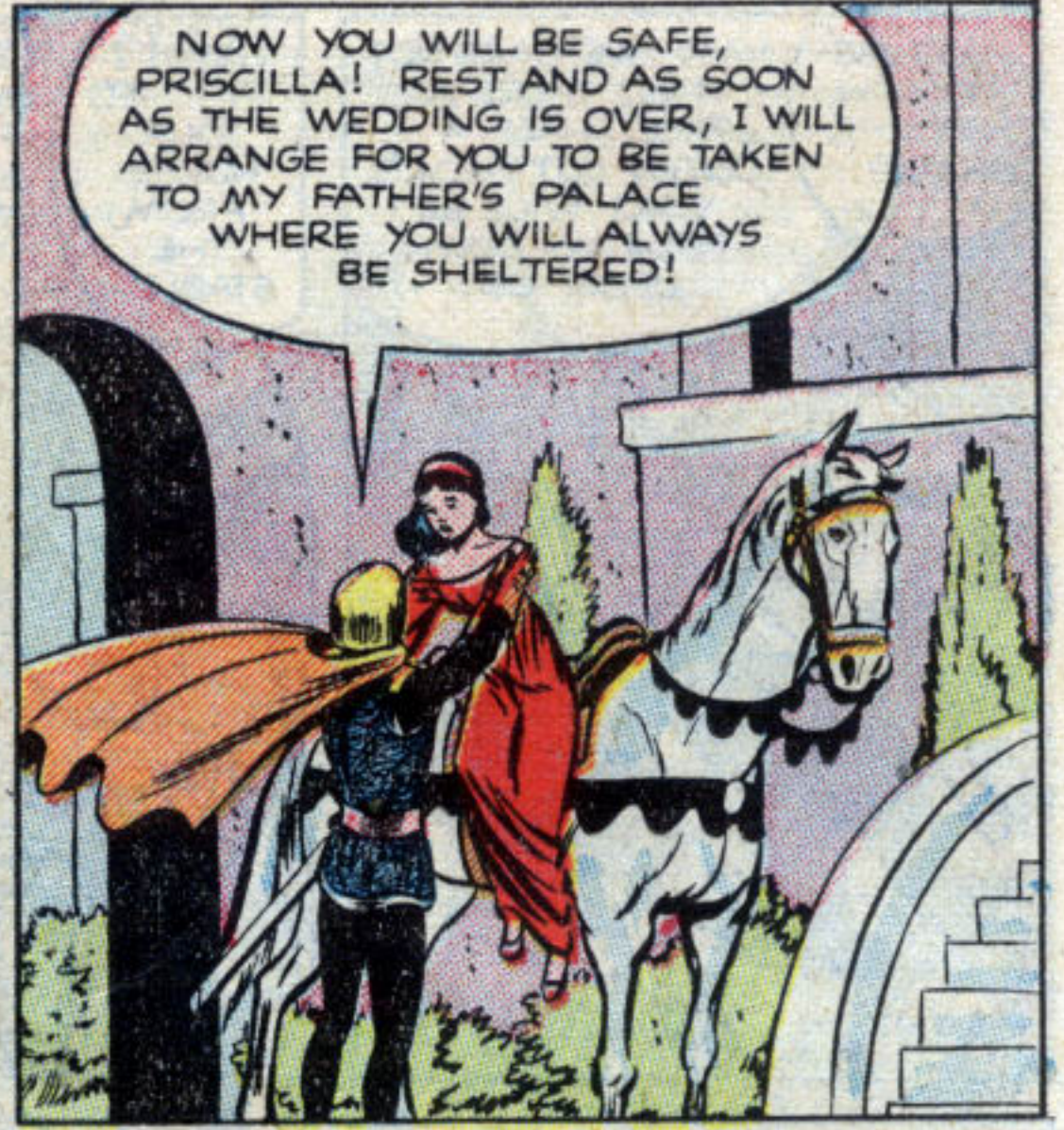
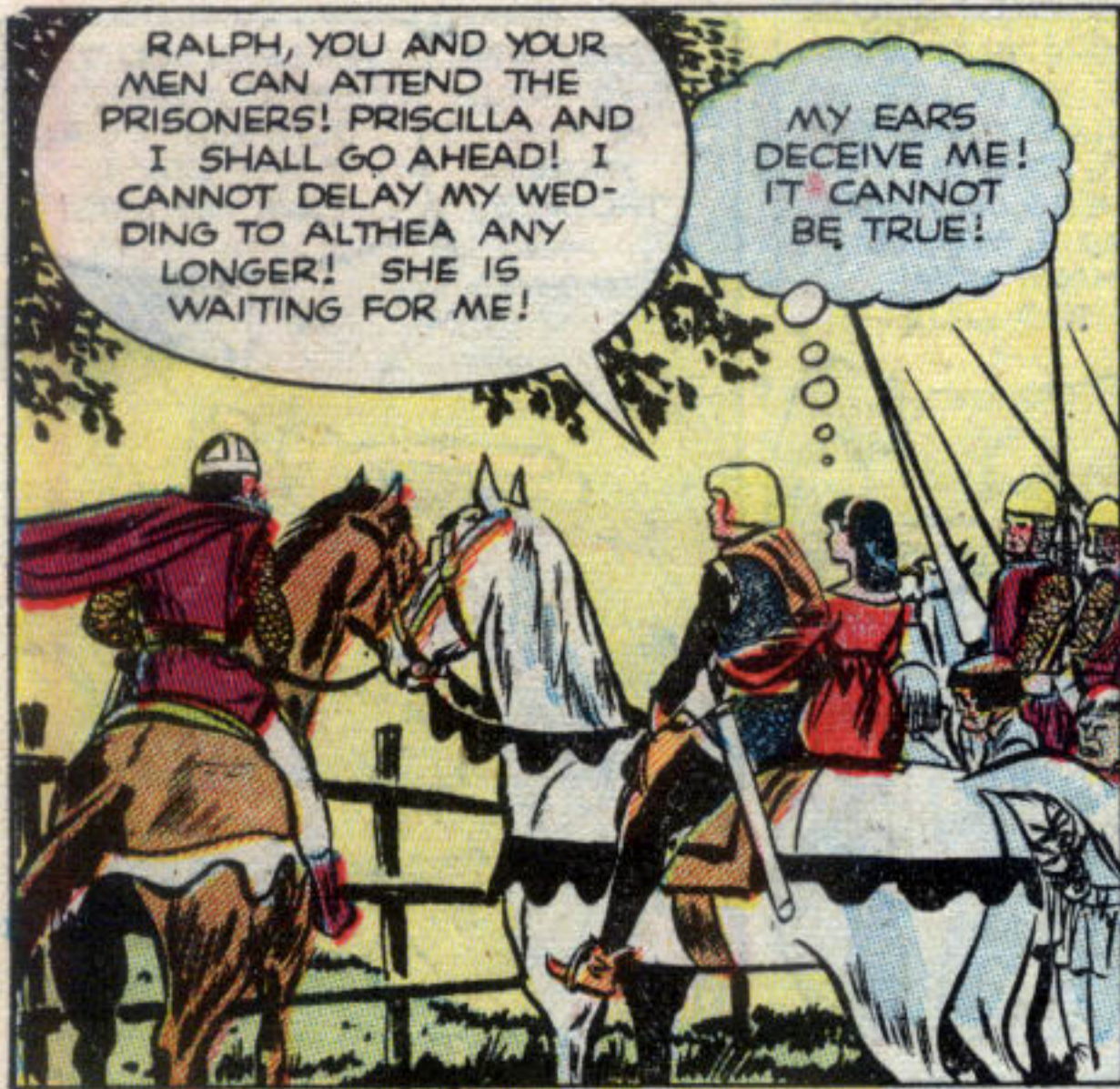
MY HORSE CAN EASILY RIP THEM OFF!



SIR RALPH!

STAND BACK!

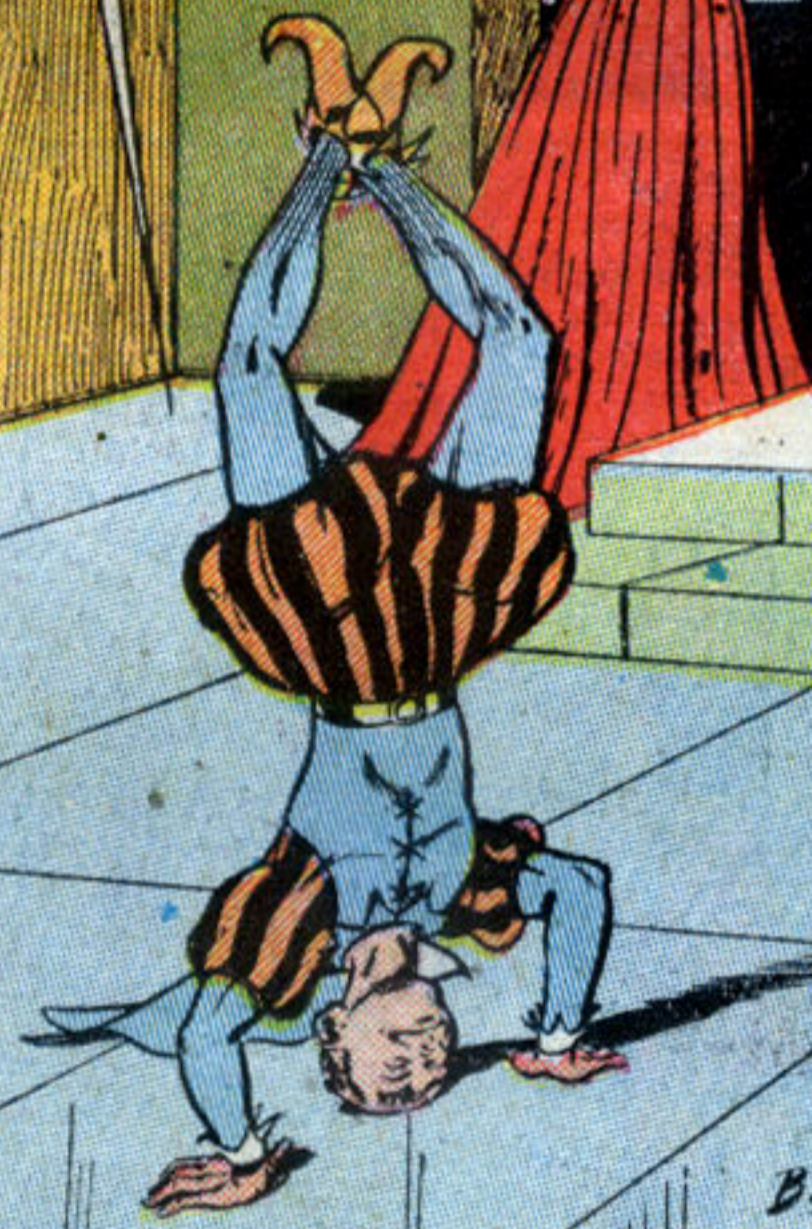




LAUGH IF YOU WILL, YOUR MAJESTY! I SHALL YET WIN THE WAGER! SEE IF I DON'T!

FATHER! WHAT IS THE EXPLANATION OF THIS FOOLISHNESS?

AH...HA..HA..HA! COME AND WATCH, PRINCESS! I HAVE WAGERED THIS SERVANT A SACK OF GOLD AGAINST THIS MONTH'S WAGES HE CANNOT STAND ON HIS HEAD TWO HOURS!



B. F. UJE

Not even during once-upon-a-time was a king's life always easy. Though many ruled their people wisely, some had difficulty ruling themselves, for few of a king's subjects would dare correct him, much less scold him. My story about an unwise king begins "once upon a time long before soda pops, comic books and presidents..."
(UNCLE) CHARLIE BIRO

A KING'S SECOND CHANCE



GOODNESS! WILL YOU EVER STOP THAT SILLY BETTING? I'LL PUSH THAT DROLIO OVER!

SILENCE, PRINCESS!

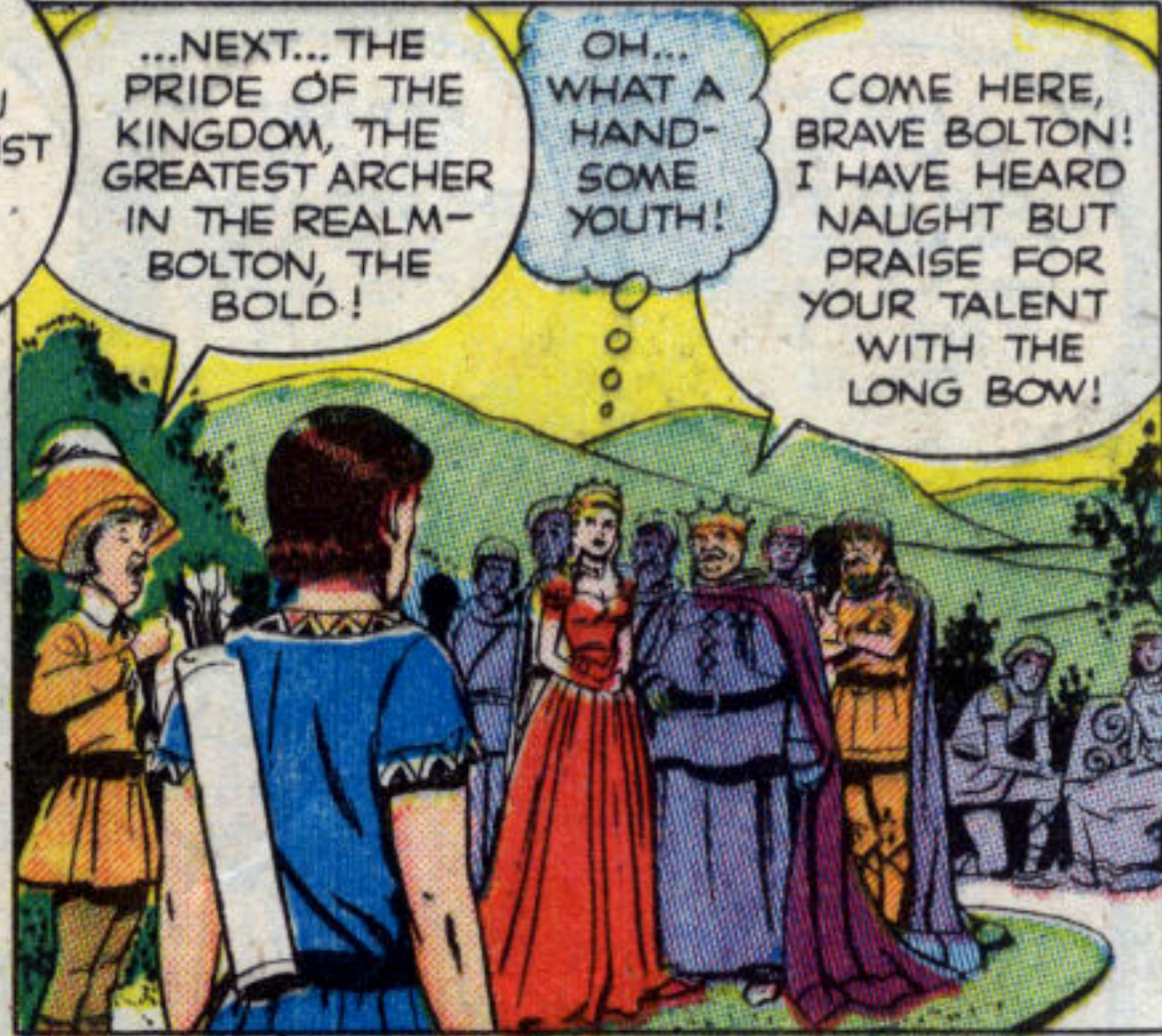
Twenty-one minutes later...



BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME, YOUR MAJESTY!

THERE! YOU SEE! YOU LOST AGAIN! AND DO YOU REALIZE YOU ARE DUE AT A KNIGHTING CEREMONY IN TWENTY MINUTES!

GADZOOKS, DAUGHTER! STOP NAGGING! I'LL WAGER YOU MY CROWN AGAINST YOUR DOWRY THAT I'LL MAKE IT IN TIME!



...NEXT... THE PRIDE OF THE KINGDOM, THE GREATEST ARCHER IN THE REALM— BOLTON, THE BOLD!

OH... WHAT A HANDSOME YOUTH!

COME HERE, BRAVE BOLTON! I HAVE HEARD NAUGHT BUT PRAISE FOR YOUR TALENT WITH THE LONG BOW!



BEFORE WE PROCEED, WOULD YOU CARE TO INDULGE IN A LITTLE WAGER? IF YOU CAN SHOOT THE HAT OFF YOUR GLIARD WITH AN ARROW AT TEN PACES, I WILL DOUBLE MY GRANT FOR YOUR KNIGHTHOOD!

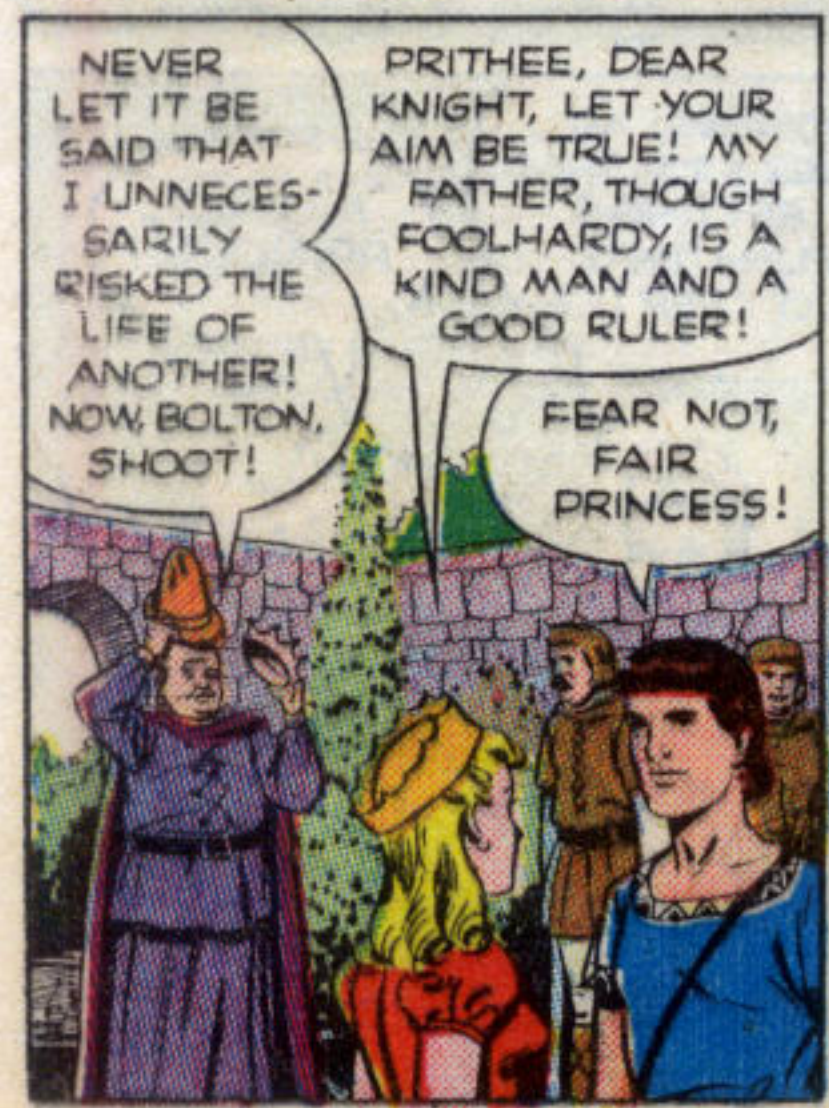
WERE I TO REFUSE, I WOULD APPEAR TO DOUBT MY OWN SKILL! YOU HAVE MADE A WAGER, YOUR MAJESTY!



I PRAY YOUR PERFORMANCE EQUALS YOUR REPUTATION!

FATHER! YOU ARE GOING TOO FAR! YOU ARE MAKING LIGHT OF ANOTHER MAN'S LIFE FOR THE SAKE OF A FOOLISH WAGER! WHAT IF HE SHOULD MISS?

YOU ARE RIGHT, MY CHILD! I OVERLOOKED THAT POINT! BOLTON! WAIT!



NEVER LET IT BE SAID THAT I UNNECESSARILY RISKED THE LIFE OF ANOTHER! NOW, BOLTON, SHOOT!

PRITHEE, DEAR KNIGHT, LET YOUR AIM BE TRUE! MY FATHER, THOUGH FOOLHARDY, IS A KIND MAN AND A GOOD RULER!

FEAR NOT, FAIR PRINCESS!



HE HAS DONE IT!

HE HAS HIT THE HAT!

TRULY A GREAT ARCHER!

THAT WAS A MASTER SHOT, BOLTON! NOW, LET US PROCEED WITH THE CEREMONY!



DID YOU NOT CONSIDER THAT YOU WOULD HAVE LOST EITHER WAY? AS IT IS, YOU HAD TO DOUBLE BOLTON'S AWARD AND BESTOW A DUKEDOM ON HIM!

BUT IT WAS ONLY MONEY! WHY SHOULD YOU FUSS OVER SUCH A TRIFLE?



YES, BUT HAD YOU WON YOU WOULD DOUBTLESS BE DEAD!

WHAT? YOU MEAN... OHHH...

THE KING HAS FAINTED!



AS LORD PRIVY TREASURER, I AM GRAVELY CONCERNED OVER THE CONDITION OF THE ROYAL TREASURY! PUMMEY, YOU'RE KING BARNABY'S CHIEF ADVISOR! IS THERE NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO STOP HIS BETTING?

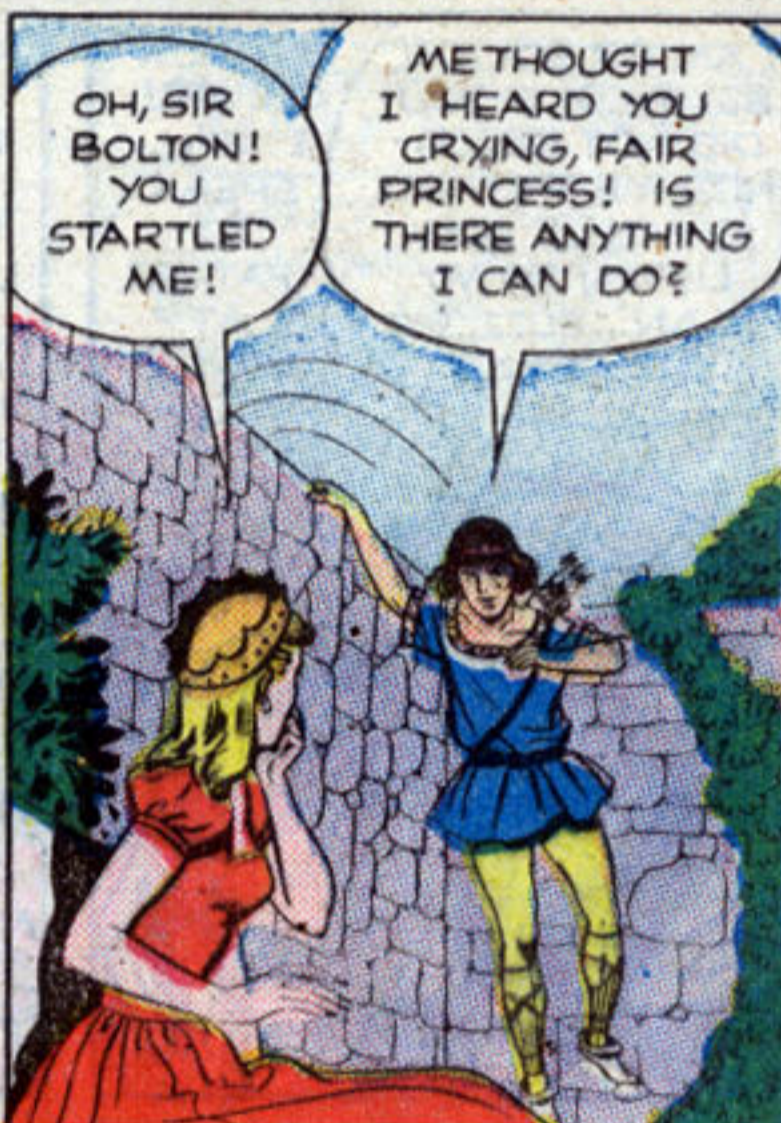
HA! THE MORE I PLEAD THE MORE HE BETS! HIS WAGERS ARE RUINING THE COUNTRY! SEE HOW THE KINGDOM HAS DWINDLED!

Later, as Sir Bolton walks past the palace wall...



I HEAR THE SOUND OF A GIRL WEeping!

SOB! SOB!



OH, SIR BOLTON! YOU STARTLED ME!

METHOUGHT I HEARD YOU CRYING, FAIR PRINCESS! IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO?



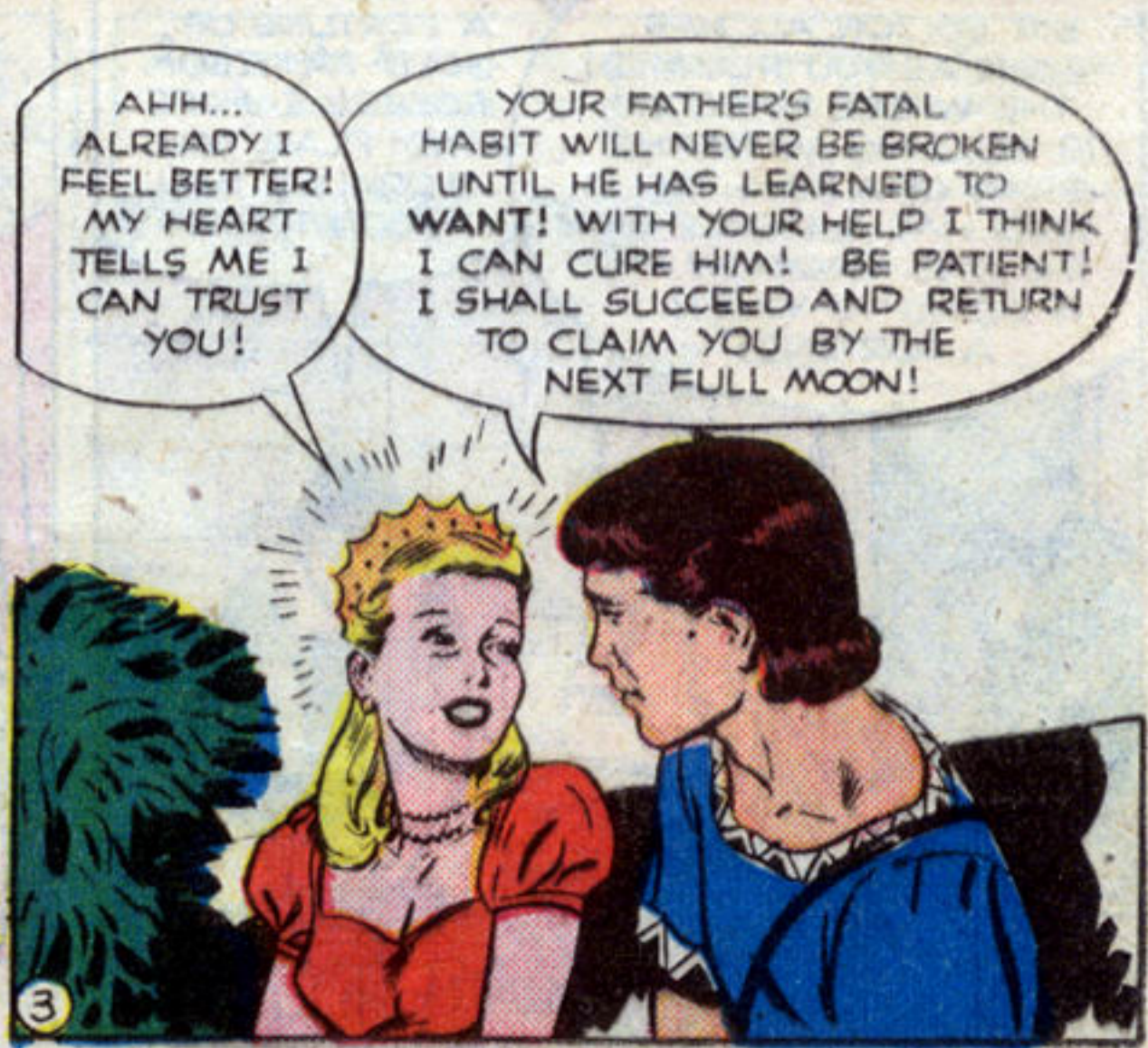
NAY, I FEEL NOBODY CAN HELP! IT'S MY FATHER'S CONSTANT BETTING! THE KINGDOM IS GOING TO RACK AND RUIN! SOON THE ROYAL TREASURY WILL BE BANKRUPT AND THE KINGDOM WILL COLLAPSE!

PRINCESS DIANE, IT GRIEVES ME SORELY TO SEE YOU UNHAPPY! I'VE LOVED YOU EVER SINCE I FIRST BEHELD YOU!



DEAR DIANE, MY THOUGHTS ARE WITH YOU CONSTANTLY! DARE I HOPE SOME DAY TO HAVE YOU FOR MY BRIDE?

OH, YES! YES, SIR BOLTON! I WILL INDEED MARRY YOU! BUT FIRST, WE MUST DO SOMETHING ABOUT MY FATHER! I CANNOT MARRY UNTIL THEN!



AHH... ALREADY I FEEL BETTER! MY HEART TELLS ME I CAN TRUST YOU!

YOUR FATHER'S FATAL HABIT WILL NEVER BE BROKEN UNTIL HE HAS LEARNED TO WANT! WITH YOUR HELP I THINK I CAN CURE HIM! BE PATIENT! I SHALL SUCCEED AND RETURN TO CLAIM YOU BY THE NEXT FULL MOON!



AH, SIR BOLTON, WITH THIS MUSTACHE IN PLACE AND HIS COSTUME YOU COULD BE KING TRELIS' TWIN! YOU COULD EASILY FOOL HIS CLOSEST FRIENDS!

GOOD! KING BARNABY HAS A SHARP EYE AND WILL BE A HARD MAN TO FOOL SO I MUST BE SURE OF MY DISGUISE!



FAREWELL, AND GOOD LUCK, SIR BOLTON! I SHALL PRAY FOR THE SUCCESS OF YOUR VENTURE!



AH, PRINCESS DIANE, YOUR EYES ARE AS LIMPID AS TWO SUNLIT POOLS!

WHAT? WHO ARE YOU, SIRE, TO SPEAK TO FAMILIARLY?



I AM SIR BOLTON, BELOVED! IF YOU DID NOT RECOGNIZE ME THEN ALL IS WELL! NOW LISTEN TO MY PLAN... BUZZ...BUZ BUZ...BUZZ...

OH! HOW CLEVER! I WILL SPEAK TO FATHER AT ONCE!



FATHER, A RUMOR IS SPREADING THROUGH THE KINGDOM THAT KING TRELIS, FROM THE LANDS TO THE WEST HAS COME LADEN WITH WEALTH AND WISHES TO SEE YOU AND MAKE A WAGER!

INDEED! AND HE HAS GREAT WEALTH TO WAGER? HM, WHAT SHALL I SET AS A WAGER?



SIR BOLTON, ALL HAS GONE AS YOU PLANNED! THE WHOLE KINGDOM IS BUZZING WITH THE STORY OF A KING TRELIS WHO HAS AUDIENCE WITH THE KING TOMORROW AND IS GOING TO WAGER A FORTUNE!

A FORTUNE OF GOLD-PAINTED ROCKS! I HOPE MY PLAN WILL WORK! WE WILL SOON KNOW!



HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, KING TRELIS OF WESTLANDIA!

GREETINGS, KING BARNABY! WORD OF YOUR LOVE OF WAGERING HAS SPREAD! I, TOO, AM A SPORTING MAN, AND AS YOU CAN SEE I HAVE COME WELL PREPARED!

WHAT HAVE YOU THERE? LET ME SEE!



GOLD BARS, YOUR HIGHNESS!

WHAT CAN I WAGER AGAINST ALL THIS WEALTH?

YOUR KINGDOM? SURELY NOTHING LESS!



MY KINGDOM! AYE, BUT WHAT OF MY SUBJECTS? I'VE NO RIGHT TO GAMBLE THEM AWAY... STILL, MY KINGDOM IS ON THE BRINK OF RUIN... WERE I TO WIN, IT WOULD BRING PROSPERITY TO EVERYONE!

ARCHERY! THE BEST MAN IN YOUR KINGDOM AGAINST ME!

I'LL DO IT! NAME THE WAGER!



AGAINST YOU? HO! HO! THE GOLD IS ALREADY MINE! NO ONE ON EARTH CAN BEAT MY MAN!

WE SHALL HOLD THE CONTEST TOMORROW AT HIGH NOON!



'TIS A TERRIBLE THING TO GAMBLE A KINGDOM!

SILENCE! I HAVE LOST WAGERS BEFORE, BUT THIS TIME WITH SIR BOLTON AS MY MAN I CANNOT LOSE! I SHALL USE THE GOLD TO BUY BACK ALL THE LANDS I HAVE LOST IN THE PAST!



... AND YOU WILL REPRESENT ME AGAINST KING TRELIS! I PUT ALL MY FAITH IN YOUR SKILL, SO DO NOT FAIL ME! AS YOUR REWARD FOR WINNING, I WILL GIVE YOU THE HAND OF MY DAUGHTER, PRINCESS DIANE, IN MARRIAGE!

I WILL DO MY BEST!



NOW LISTEN CAREFULLY, HECTOR! YOU WILL APPEAR AS TRELIS, BUT I WILL SHOOT FOR US BOTH! THERE ARE DRESSING ROOMS PROVIDED BEHIND THE FIRING LINE WHERE WE CAN CHANGE BETWEEN MY TURN AND YOURS! I SHALL SHOOT FIRST, AS BOLTON!

WHAT IF THE KING WOULD LEARN OF YOUR DECEPTION! AYE, I WORRY! I AM BUT A POOR SERVANT!

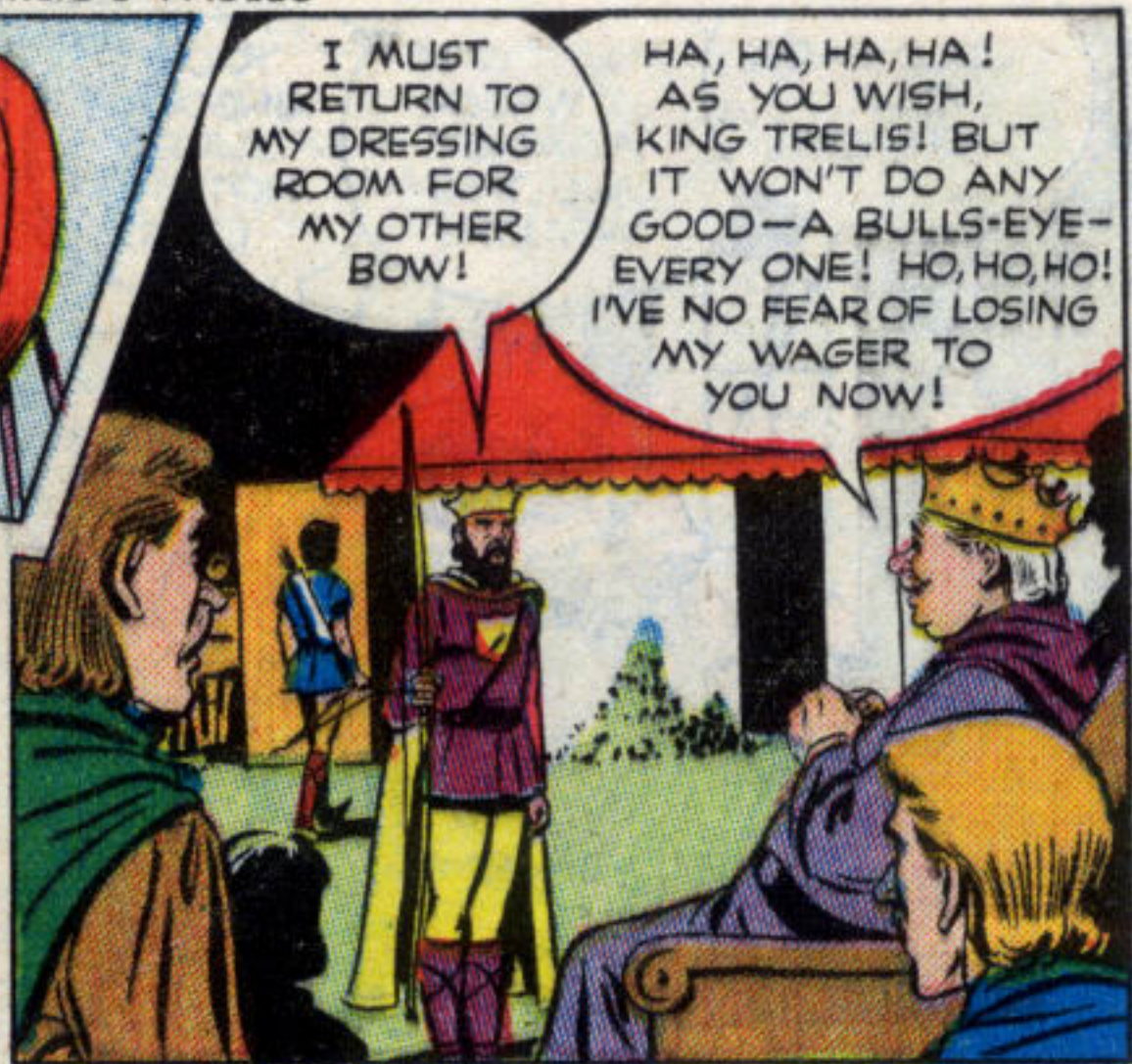
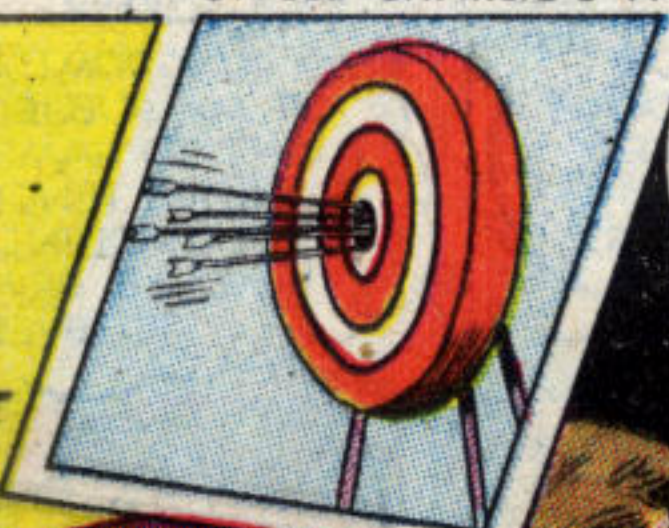


And so, the hour of the contest arrives! Everyone who can crowd the grounds is there to witness the match...

THE ARCHERY CONTEST SHALL BEGIN! SIR BOLTON SHALL BE THE FIRST TO SHOOT!



NONE CAN BEAT HIM! EVERY SHOT A BULLS-EYE!



I MUST RETURN TO MY DRESSING ROOM FOR MY OTHER BOW!

HA, HA, HA, HA! AS YOU WISH, KING TRELIS! BUT IT WON'T DO ANY GOOD—A BULLS-EYE—EVERY ONE! HO, HO, HO! I'VE NO FEAR OF LOSING MY WAGER TO YOU NOW!



HASTE, HECTOR! OUR ONLY DANGER LIES IN HAVING SOMEONE SEE US!

AYE, WE ARE DOING WELL THUS FAR!



LOOK HERE! THIS TRELIS IS NO NOVICE!

ANOTHER BULLS-EYE!

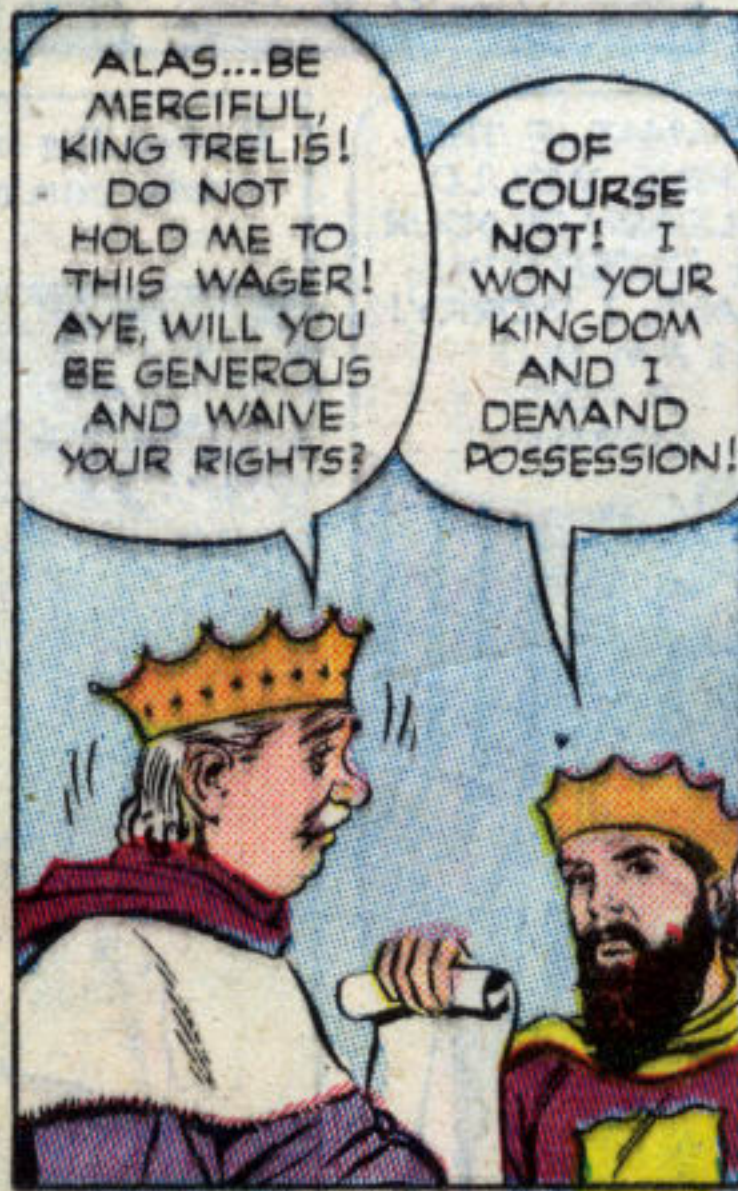


BUT THEY ARE ALL IN THE EXACT CENTER!



HOLD! WAIT KING BARNABY! I HAVE WON BY WAGER AND NOW YOU MUST PAY ME! HERE IS A DOCUMENT GIVING ALL OF YOUR KINGDOM TO ME! ALL IT REQUIRES IS YOUR SIGNATURE!

OH, FATHER, NOW YOU SEE WHAT AN EVIL WAGERING IS? YOU HAVE LOST YOUR KINGDOM!



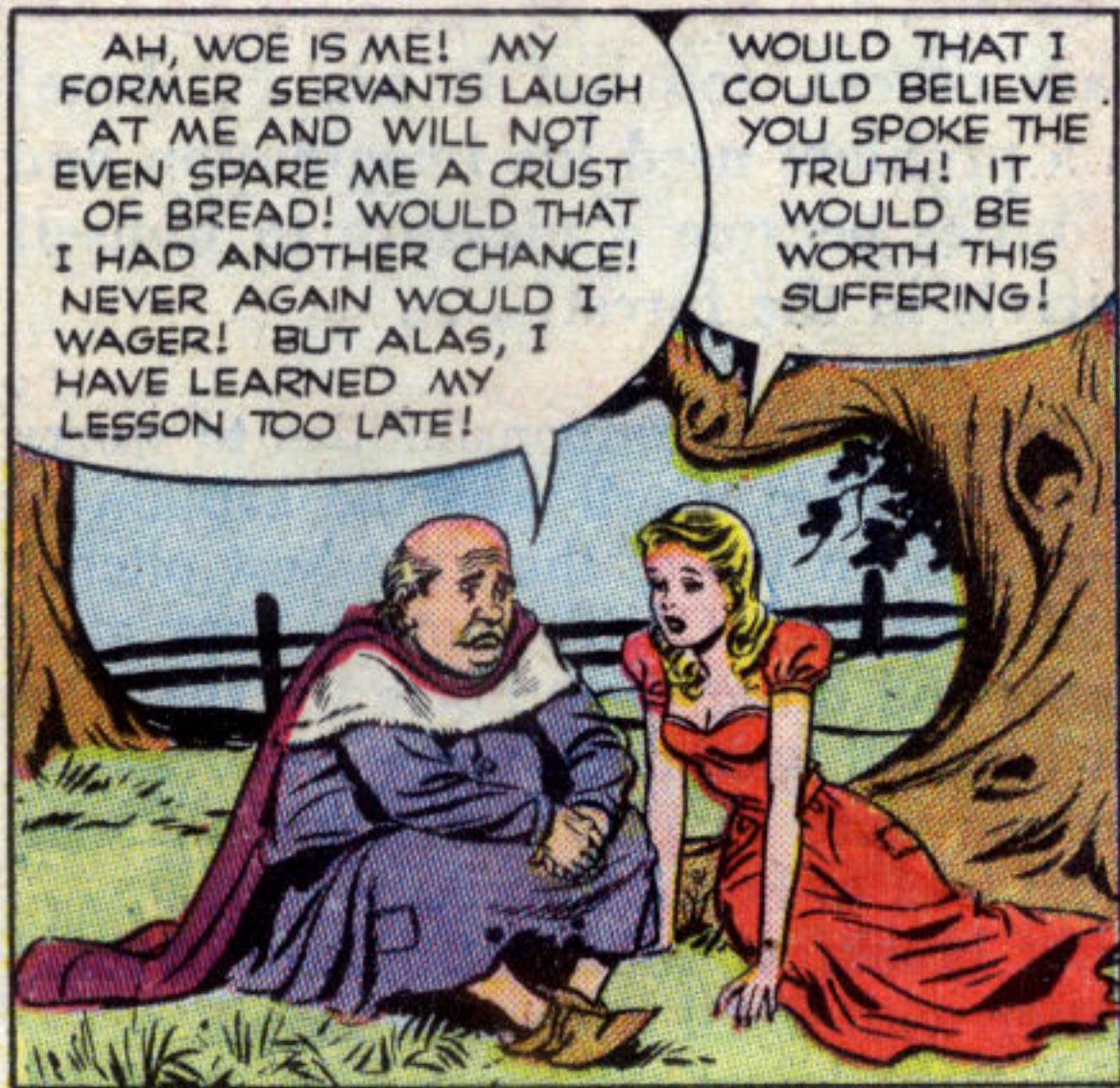
ALAS...BE MERCIFUL, KING TRELIS! DO NOT HOLD ME TO THIS WAGER! AYE, WILL YOU BE GENEROUS AND WAIVE YOUR RIGHTS?

OF COURSE NOT! I WON YOUR KINGDOM AND I DEMAND POSSESSION!



NOW THAT I AM KING OF FORTUNIA IT IS MY ROYAL COMMAND THAT YOU BE FOREVER BANISHED FROM THE PALACE! GO!

ALAS, FATHER, HOW MANY TIMES I TRIED TO WARN YOU BUT YOU WOULD NOT HEED ME! COME, LET US GO!



AH, WOE IS ME! MY FORMER SERVANTS LAUGH AT ME AND WILL NOT EVEN SPARE ME A CRUST OF BREAD! WOULD THAT I HAD ANOTHER CHANCE! NEVER AGAIN WOULD I WAGER! BUT ALAS, I HAVE LEARNED MY LESSON TOO LATE!

WOULD THAT I COULD BELIEVE YOU SPOKE THE TRUTH! IT WOULD BE WORTH THIS SUFFERING!



REST HERE, FATHER! I WILL GO FOR A WALK! PERHAPS I CAN FIND SOME BERRIES AND NUTS FOR OUR SUPPER!

I WILL GO TO THE OLD BARN THAT IS NOW OUR HOME AND WAIT THERE FOR YOU TO RETURN!

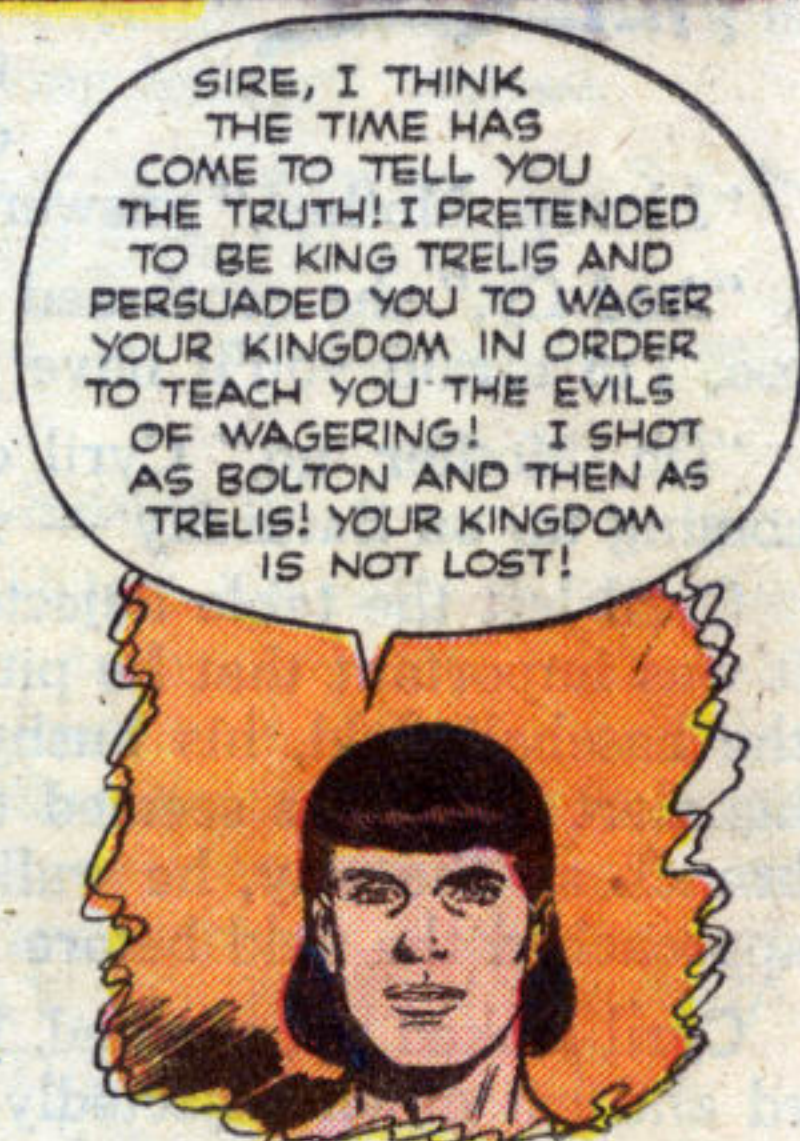


SIR BOLTON, PERHAPS WE HAVE SUCCEEDED IN CURING MY FATHER! TODAY HE WISHED FOR ANOTHER CHANCE AND VOWED HE WOULD NEVER AGAIN GAMBLE! I THINK HE HAS SUFFERED ENOUGH!

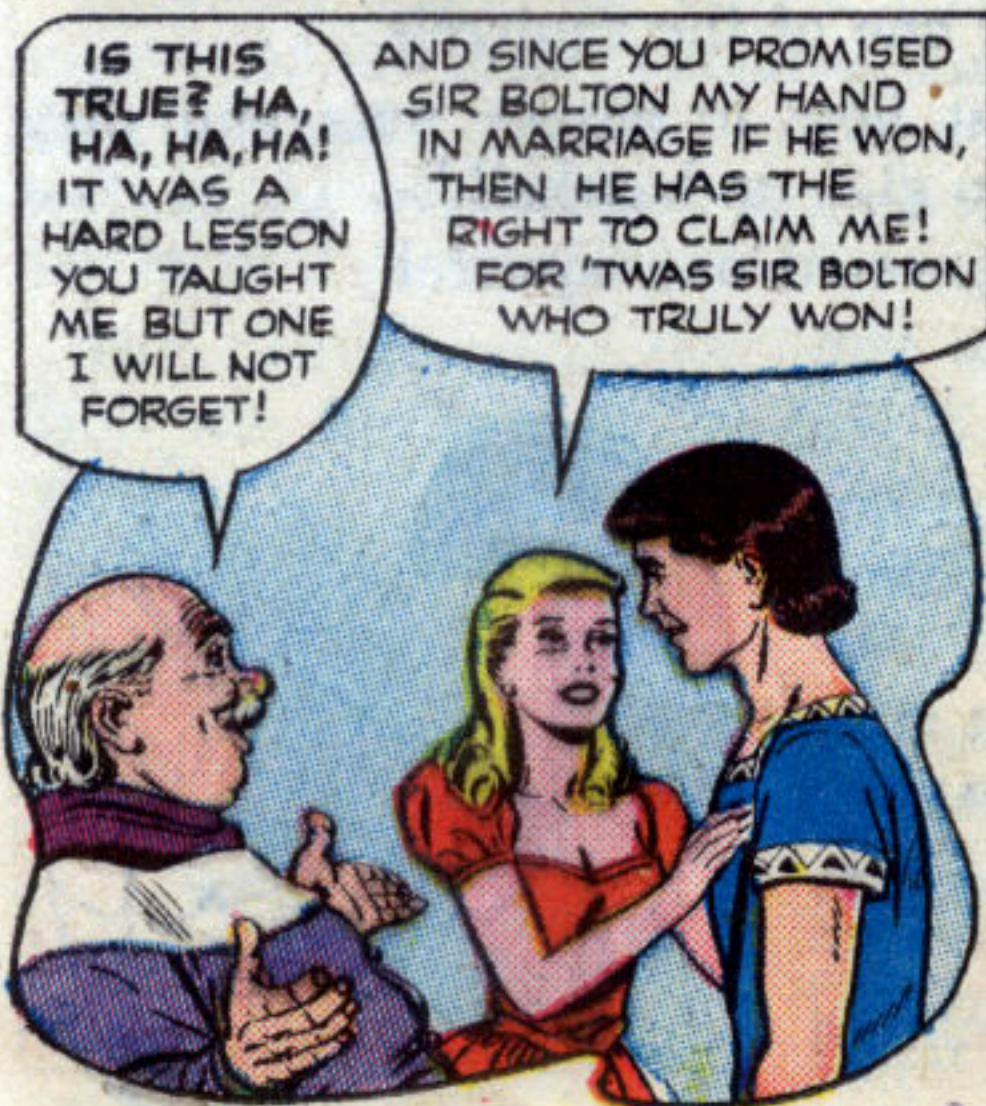
GOOD! LET US GO AND SEE HIM TOGETHER!



BOLTON! NEVER DID I BELIEVE THAT YOU COULD LOSE THAT MATCH! BUT I BEAR YOU NO ILL WILL! STRANGELY ENOUGH I OWE YOU MY THANKS! THROUGH YOU I LEARNED MY LESSON!

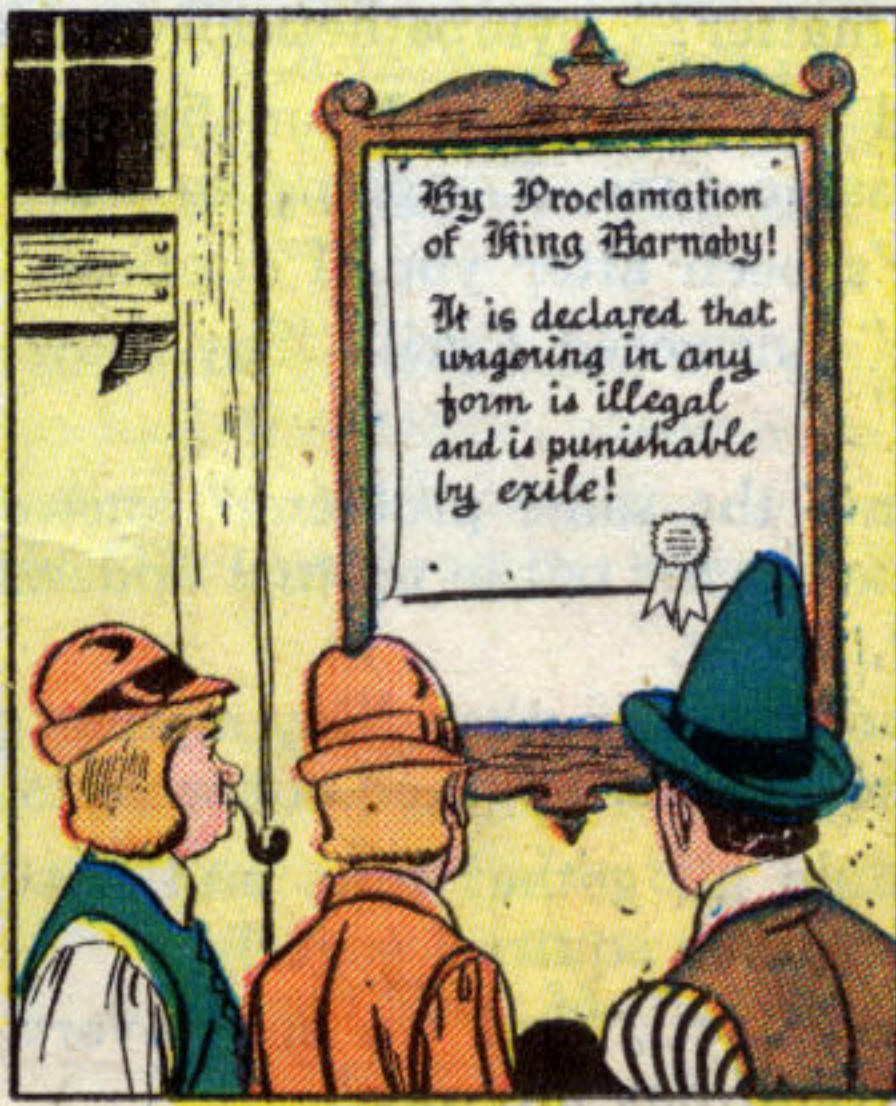


SIRE, I THINK THE TIME HAS COME TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH! I PRETENDED TO BE KING TRELIS AND PERSUADED YOU TO WAGER YOUR KINGDOM IN ORDER TO TEACH YOU THE EVILS OF WAGERING! I SHOT AS BOLTON AND THEN AS TRELIS! YOUR KINGDOM IS NOT LOST!



IS THIS TRUE? HA, HA, HA, HA! IT WAS A HARD LESSON YOU TAUGHT ME BUT ONE I WILL NOT FORGET!

AND SINCE YOU PROMISED SIR BOLTON MY HAND IN MARRIAGE IF HE WON, THEN HE HAS THE RIGHT TO CLAIM ME! FOR 'T WAS SIR BOLTON WHO TRULY WON!

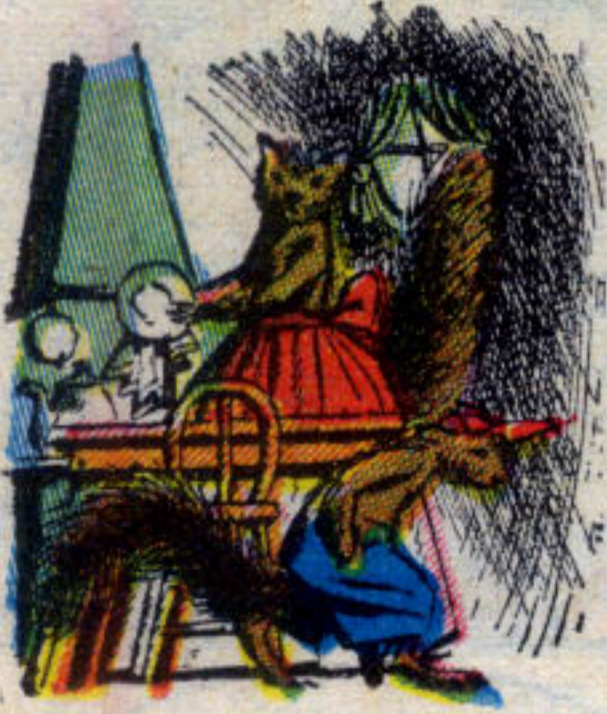


By Proclamation of King Barnaby!
It is declared that wagering in any form is illegal and is punishable by exile!

And to this very day in the kingdom of Fortunia not a single person has been known to make the most simple wager, for King Barnaby's edict is still written into the law of the realm!

A BIG DAY FOR SQUIRRELS

It is not easy to please yourself and please others, too but it *can* be done! Here's how a bright little squirrel with a problem used his imagination and produced such a good solution that his duties became a pleasure to himself and a wonderful surprise to all the squirrels in the forest! . . .



Cyril had too many outside responsibilities to worry about winter food supplies. Cyril was the captain of the baseball team and on top of that, the best pitcher the squirrels had ever had. Cyril's mother kept after him to gather nuts and bring them home for the winter's supply but baseball was much more important to Cyril. The squirrels were to play the chipmunks on Saturday and that was to be an important game.

One morning at breakfast, Mother Squirrel decided to settle the matter with Cyril once and for all.

"Cy," she said, "you know we must have food for the winter. If we all don't gather it now we may run out of food and have nothing to eat."

"I know, Mother," answered Cyril as he stuffed his mouth full of cereal.

"And Cy," she continued sternly, "if you can't play baseball and gather nuts too, I'm afraid you'll have to stop playing baseball!"

"Oh, Mother, no," Cyril choked on the cereal. "The most important game is coming up on Saturday — with the chipmunks."

Cyril left the table dejectedly. He knew his mother was right, but he also knew it was important that he pitch for the team on Saturday. As he walked toward the baseball field, his bushy tail drooped, his eyes lost their sparkle and even his alert little ears seemed to be at half-mast. Instead of leaping from branch to branch all the way, he walked slowly along the ground. Lost in his thoughts he approached the field before he knew it and was interrupted by a yell, "Hi, Cy!"

Cyril looked up, startled. Here were the boys waiting for him. "Hi," he muttered and sat down dejectedly with his friends.

"What's the matter?" sympathetically asked one of the squirrels.

"Well," sighed Cyril, "unless I can figure out how to gather nuts and play baseball at the same time, I'm going to have to give up baseball."

"Your mother's been after you, I suppose," guessed one squirrel.

"You're right," answered Cyril. "Say, how do you fellahs manage?"

"We all run into the same problem," answered another squirrel, waving his tail in mutual understanding. "I've been lucky, so far."

"I haven't," continued another. "My mother got after me last night. And I haven't figured out what to do yet."

"Maybe we could all gather nuts and not practice one day," suggested one squirrel eagerly.

"Yessss," mused Cyril, "but we need every minute of practice, until Saturday anyway."

The circle of squirrels looked dejected. Then another



one piped up, "Maybe we can get up real early for a couple of days."

"Yesss," agreed Cyril again. "But we can't cut our sleep short before this game, that's breaking training. Wait! I have an idea!" Ears perked up, eyes shone, as Cyril pieced together his idea. "First we have to talk to the chipmunks, then we have to get some paint and paper."

The problem solved, the squirrels warmed up for Saturday's game. Cyril had never been in better pitching form. Even Stan, the black sheep of the team, knocked a home run. After practice they all went off in their separate directions. Cyril went to see the captain of the chipmunk team and several others went after paper and paint to distribute among the squirrels.

The next morning at breakfast, Cyril was confronted by his father. "Cy," said Father Squirrel gruffly, as he poured out another cup of coffee, "your mother tells me you haven't been gathering nuts but have been playing baseball instead."

"Yes, Father," answered Cyril meekly. "But, Father, just give me till Saturday and I promise I'll bring home more nuts than I could gather in a week."

"How can you gather nuts on Saturday? That's the day of the game," said Father Squirrel, looking very doubtful.

"Please, Father," pleaded Cyril, "just give me till Saturday."

Before Cyril went out to baseball practice he climbed into his room in the tree and brought out several large posters. In good spirits today he went his usual way, flying from branch to branch until he scurried down onto the practice field. All the other squirrels had brought their posters and they decided to run through the forest and hang them at strategic places. On rocks, on trees, on bushes, even at the entrances to the homes of the badgers, skunks and gophers, they hung the posters which read; ALL RODENT GAME, SATURDAY, SQUIRRELS VS. CHIPMUNKS, 2 P. M. ADMISSION, ONE NUT. RESERVED SEATS, TWO NUTS.

Saturday came, the day of the big game, the event of the season. All the little animals of the forest attended. The sisters and little brothers of the squirrels and the chipmunks attended to the seating and collected the admission. Reserved seats in the overhanging branches were well filled with the older squirrels, chipmunks and some of the birds.

The stimulation of the large, enthusiastic crowd drove the squirrels to victory. Cyril was the hero of the day. Never had the crowd cheered so and never had Cyril pitched so well; striking out chipmunk after chipmunk. The final score was 12-3, the squirrel's victory.

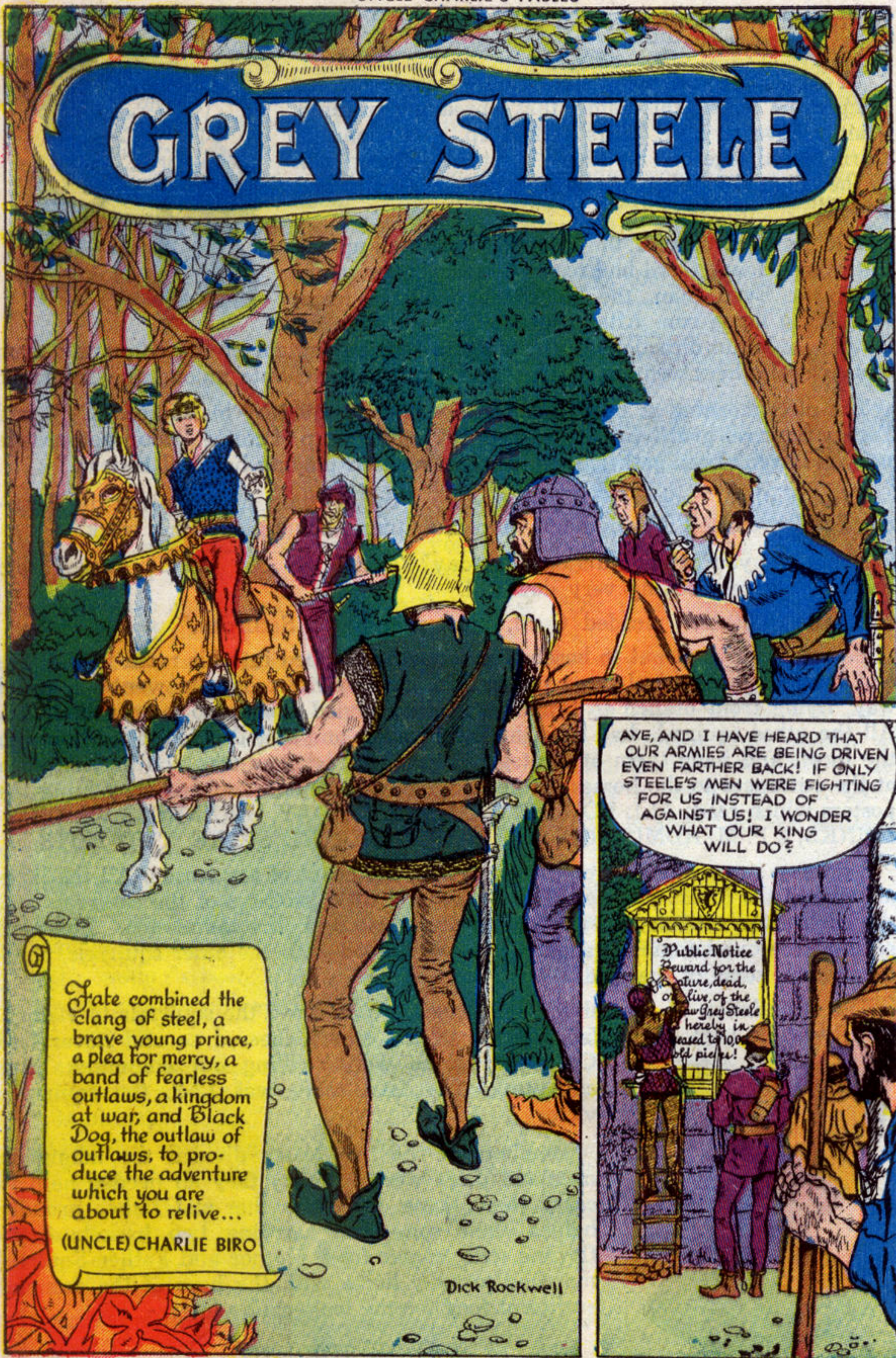
Members of the two teams divided the admission nuts and there were so many they all needed help to carry them home. Cyril's mother and father proudly helped their son, each carrying two baskets overflowing with winter food. Mother and Father Squirrel marched proudly home with the hero of the day and sufficient food for the long, cold winter.



DR

THE END

GREY STEELE



AYE, AND I HAVE HEARD THAT OUR ARMIES ARE BEING DRIVEN EVEN FARTHER BACK! IF ONLY STEELE'S MEN WERE FIGHTING FOR US INSTEAD OF AGAINST US! I WONDER WHAT OUR KING WILL DO?



Fate combined the clang of steel, a brave young prince, a plea for mercy, a band of fearless outlaws, a kingdom at war, and Black Dog, the outlaw of outlaws, to produce the adventure which you are about to relive...
 (UNCLE) CHARLIE BIRO

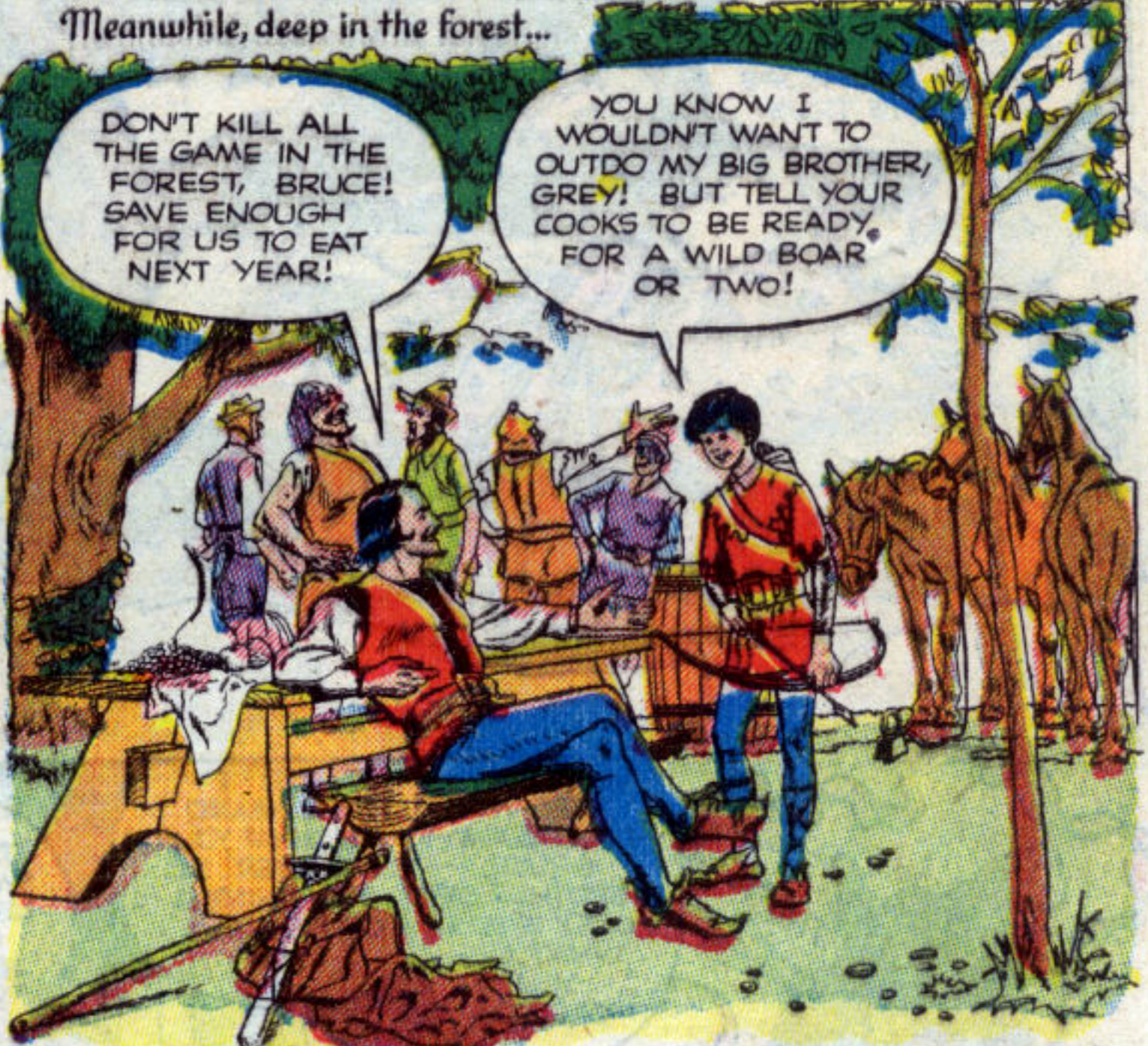
Dick Rockwell

Meanwhile, deep in the forest...



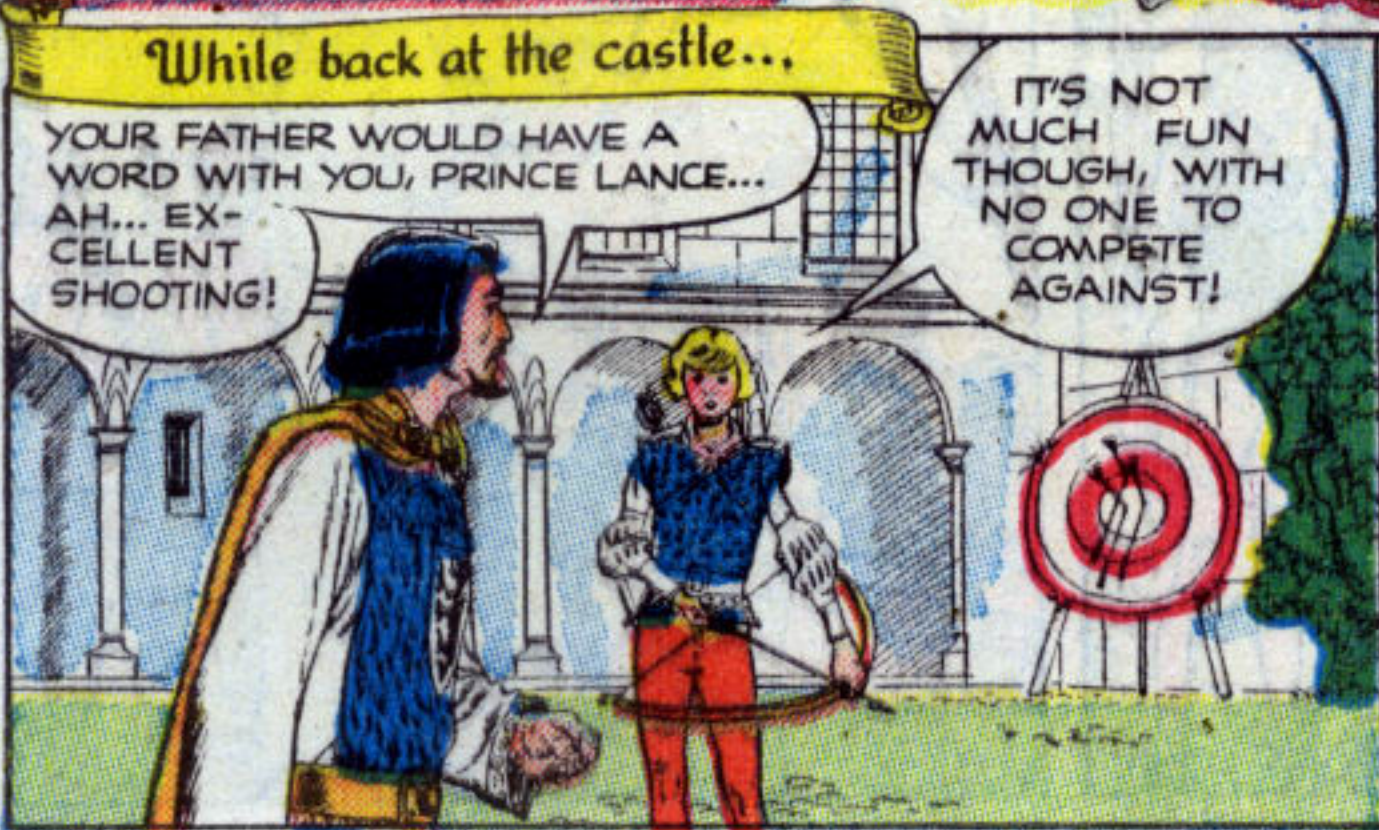
THERE IS BAD NEWS, YOUR MAJESTY! OUR ARMIES IN THE NORTH HAVE BEEN DEFEATED, AND ARE FALLING BACK ON ALL SIDES! REPLACEMENTS ARE NEEDED DESPERATELY!

ALL MY REMAINING TROOPS ARE GUARDING THE KINGDOM AGAINST GREY STEELE! IF WE COULD BUT CAPTURE HIM! SOMETHING MUST BE DONE AT ONCE!



DON'T KILL ALL THE GAME IN THE FOREST, BRUCE! SAVE ENOUGH FOR US TO EAT NEXT YEAR!

YOU KNOW I WOULDN'T WANT TO OUTDO MY BIG BROTHER, GREY! BUT TELL YOUR COOKS TO BE READY FOR A WILD BOAR OR TWO!



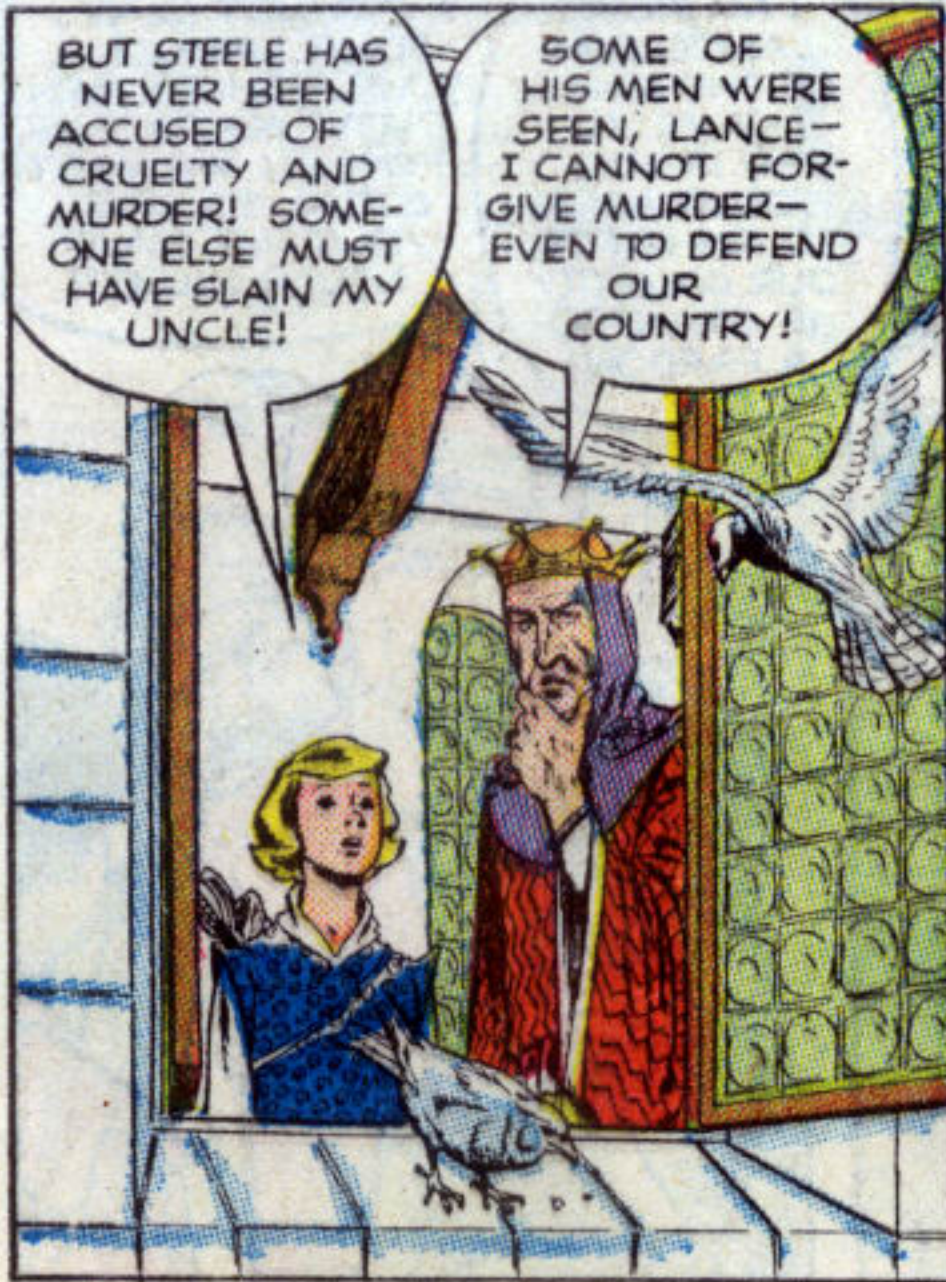
While back at the castle...

YOUR FATHER WOULD HAVE A WORD WITH YOU, PRINCE LANCE... AH... EXCELLENT SHOOTING!

IT'S NOT MUCH FUN THOUGH, WITH NO ONE TO COMPETE AGAINST!

FATHER, I WAS JUST COMING TO SEE YOU! I HAVE A PLAN FOR YOUR OUTLAW PROBLEM! WHY NOT PARDON THEM IN EXCHANGE FOR THEIR JOINING THE ARMY?

NO! NOT AFTER THE CRUEL MURDER OF MY BROTHER! BESIDES, STEELE WOULD NEVER AGREE!



BUT STEELE HAS NEVER BEEN ACCUSED OF CRUELTY AND MURDER! SOMEONE ELSE MUST HAVE SLAIN MY UNCLE!

SOME OF HIS MEN WERE SEEN, LANCE—I CANNOT FORGIVE MURDER—EVEN TO DEFEND OUR COUNTRY!

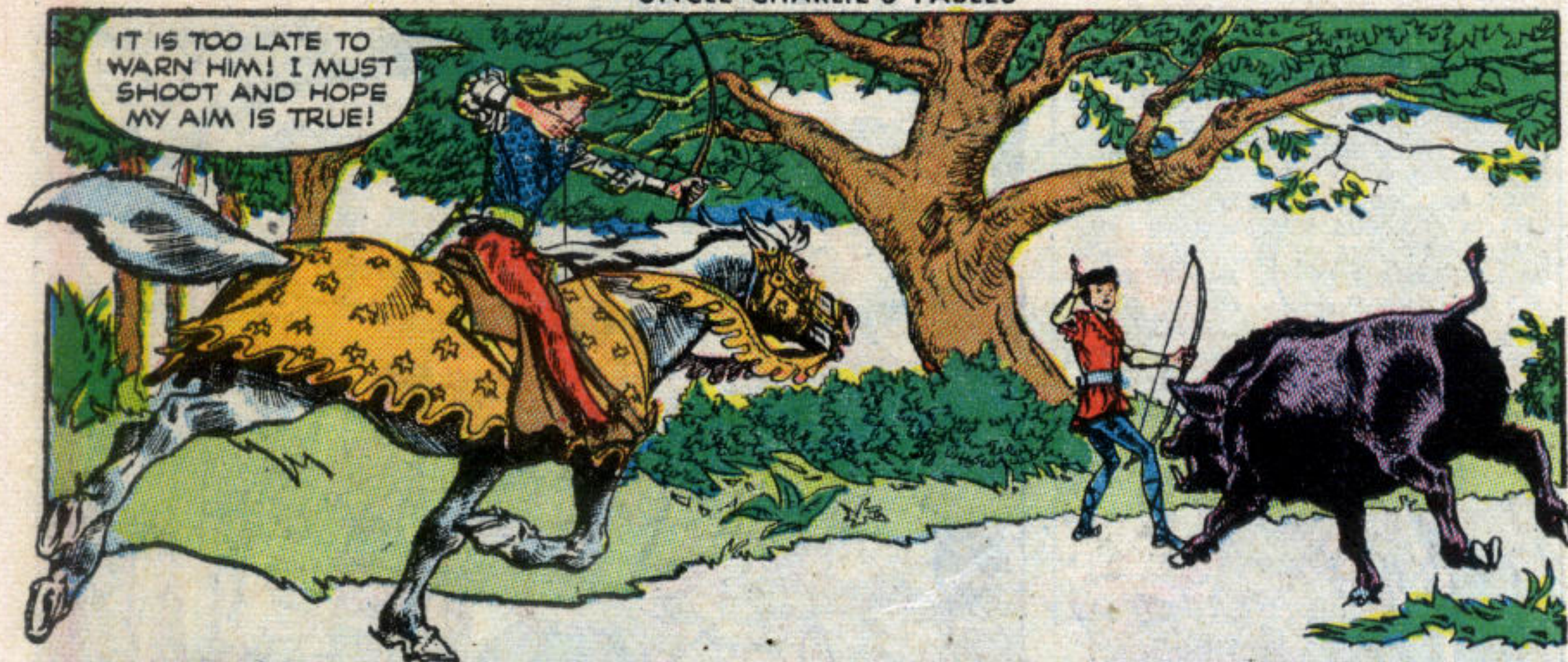


PERHAPS FATHER IS RIGHT, BUT I MUST TRY MY PLAN! I ONLY HOPE THAT I CAN FIND GREY STEELE!



Suddenly, the young prince sees a tragedy about to happen...

WHAT'S THAT! A BOY... AND A WILD BOAR IS CHARGING DOWN UPON HIM!



IT IS TOO LATE TO WARN HIM! I MUST SHOOT AND HOPE MY AIM IS TRUE!



THUNG!

YOU HAVE SAVED MY LIFE! I AM BRUCE, BROTHER OF GREY STEELE! WHAT ARE YOU CALLED?

LANCE! I HAVE HEARD MUCH OF YOUR BROTHER! DO YOU THINK I COULD MEET HIM?



THIS IS WHERE WE LIVE! THAT IS MY BROTHER WAVING!

BACK SO SOON, BRUCE? WHO IS YOUR FRIEND?

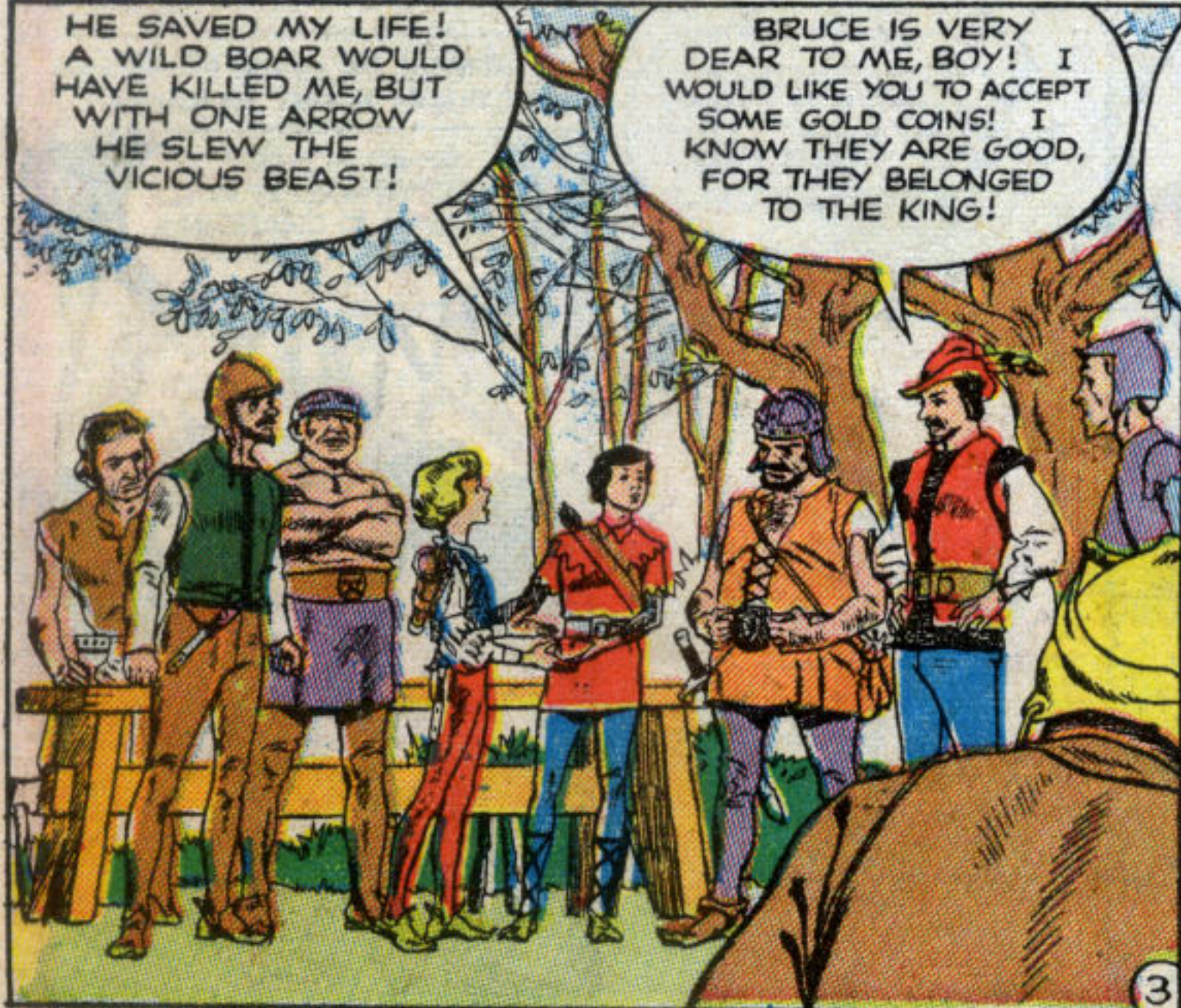


HE SAVED MY LIFE! A WILD BOAR WOULD HAVE KILLED ME, BUT WITH ONE ARROW HE SLEW THE VICIOUS BEAST!

BRUCE IS VERY DEAR TO ME, BOY! I WOULD LIKE YOU TO ACCEPT SOME GOLD COINS! I KNOW THEY ARE GOOD, FOR THEY BELONGED TO THE KING!

I AM PRINCE LANCE, SON OF THE KING! I CAME TO SEE IF YOU WOULD AGREE TO FIGHT FOR OUR COUNTRY IF GRANTED A PARDON!

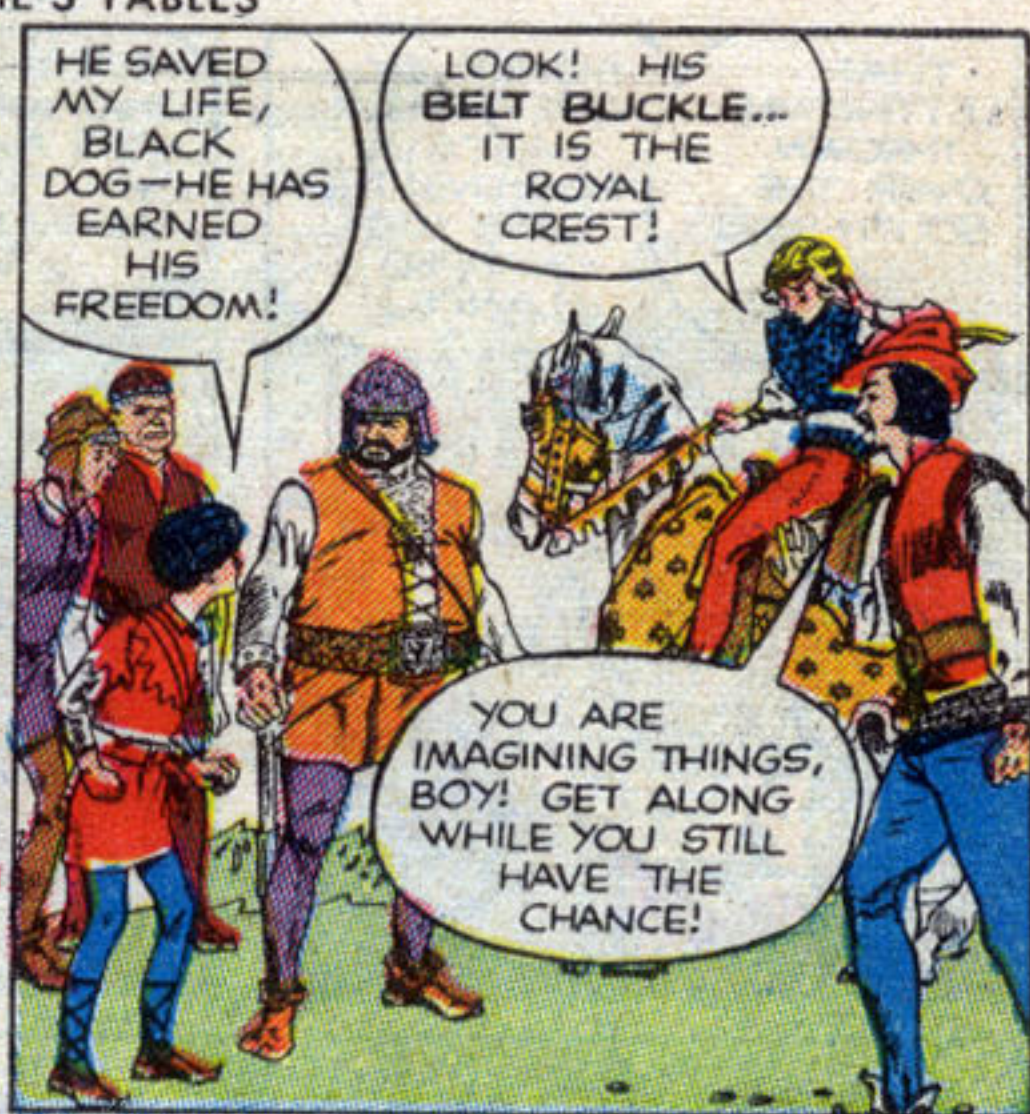
I DID NOT SLAY YOUR UNCLE! YOUR FATHER'S MEN DROVE ME TO THIS FOREST! WE MUST STEAL TO LIVE, BUT WE HAVE NEVER KILLED!





GO BACK TO YOUR FATHER AND TELL HIM THAT I AM INNOCENT! IF HE IS SINCERE... MY MEN AND I WILL BE HONORED TO FIGHT FOR OUR COUNTRY!

YOU'RE CRAZY TO LET HIM GO, STEELE! THINK OF THE RANSOM HE WOULD BRING!



HE SAVED MY LIFE, BLACK DOG—HE HAS EARNED HIS FREEDOM!

LOOK! HIS BELT BUCKLE... IT IS THE ROYAL CREST!

YOU ARE IMAGINING THINGS, BOY! GET ALONG WHILE YOU STILL HAVE THE CHANCE!



YOU WERE A FOOL TO LET HIM GO—HE WOULD HAVE BROUGHT A KING'S RANSOM!

SO YOU WERE THE ONE WHO KILLED THE KING'S BROTHER! I SHOULD HANG YOU MYSELF!



YOU'RE NOT MAN ENOUGH, STEELE!

I'M MAN ENOUGH FOR THE LIKES OF A COWARD LIKE YOU, BLACK DOG!



THAT'S NOT HALF OF WHAT YOU DESERVE, BUT MY LAW AGAINST KILLING APPLIES TO EVEN YOU! GET OUT, AND NEVER RETURN...

I'LL GO BUT DON'T THINK YOU'VE BEATEN ME! ANYONE ELSE WHO HATES THIS LILY-LIVER CAN COME WITH ME!



Prince Lance is pounced upon a while later, near the edge of the forest...

NOT SO FAST, ME YOUNG BUCKO!

PIG-EYE! TAKE THIS MESSAGE AND THROW IT OVER THE PALACE WALL!

THE KING WILL BE READING IT WITHIN THE HOUR!



THE PRINCE WAS KIDNAPPED! AND THE KING BLAMES YOU!

I KNOW THE CUR AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS! MEN! PUT ON YOUR ROYAL DISGUISES!



THERE ARE THE ROYAL GUARDS, GREY STEELE!

GENTLEMEN! I HAVE NO TIME TO EXPLAIN! YOU MUST TRUST ME! I HAVE A PLAN TO SAVE YOUNG LANCE!



WE SHALL WAIT UNDER THIS WATERFALL UNTIL BLACK DOG COMES FOR HIS RANSOM!

BLACK DOG IS BEHIND YOU!

LOOK OUT BEHIND YOU, GREY STEELE!



SO! WE MEET AGAIN, GREY STEELE! BUT THIS IS OUR FINAL MEETING!

THAT'S FINE WITH ME!



YOU DO NOT SEEM SO CLEVER NOW, STEELE! TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT YOUR FRIENDS! IT WILL BE YOUR LAST CHANCE!

STAY BACK, MEN! THIS IS OUR FIGHT!

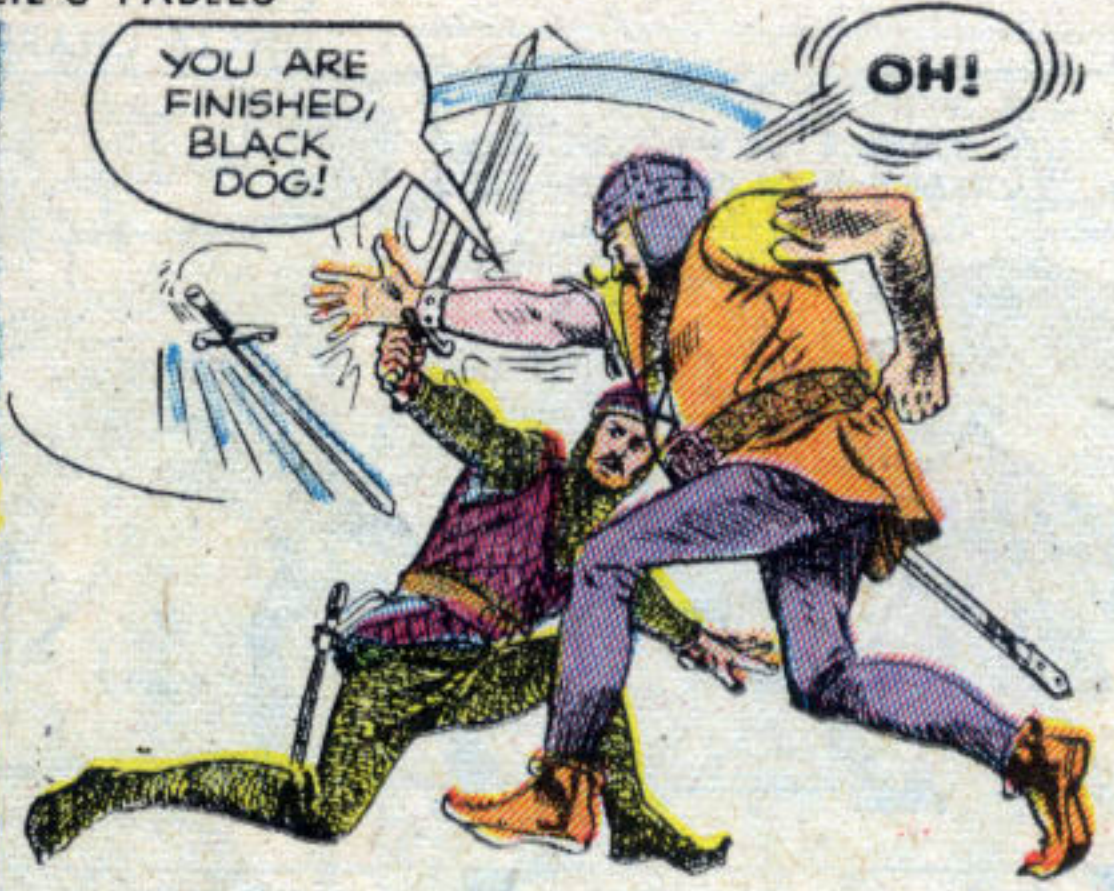
UNCLE CHARLIE'S FABLES



FAREWELL, STEELE!

NOT SO FAST, YOU BLUBBER! I AM NOT DEAD YET!

QUICK! INTO THE CAVE, MEN! PRINCE LANCE IS THERE!



YOU ARE FINISHED, BLACK DOG!

OH!



DO NOT FEAR, BLACK DOG! I WILL ALLOW THE KING THE PLEASURE OF AVENGING HIS BROTHER'S DEATH!

COME WITH ME TO THE PALACE, BRUCE! MY FATHER SHALL KNOW HOW YOU AND GREY STEELE SAVED MY LIFE!



GREY STEELE, WILL YOU ACCEPT MY FULL APOLOGIES FOR FALSELY ACCUSING YOU OF MURDER! YOU AND YOUR MEN ARE PARDONED!

THANK YOU YOUR HIGHNESS! AND MAY WE SERVE OUR COUNTRY AGAINST THE ENEMY!



And a few weeks later, the king hears better news...

WE HAVE JUST HEARD, YOUR HIGHNESS! GREY STEELE AND HIS MEN HAVE ROUTED THE ENEMY!

GREY STEELE WILL HAVE THE GREATEST HERO'S WELCOME OUR COUNTRY HAS EVER KNOWN!



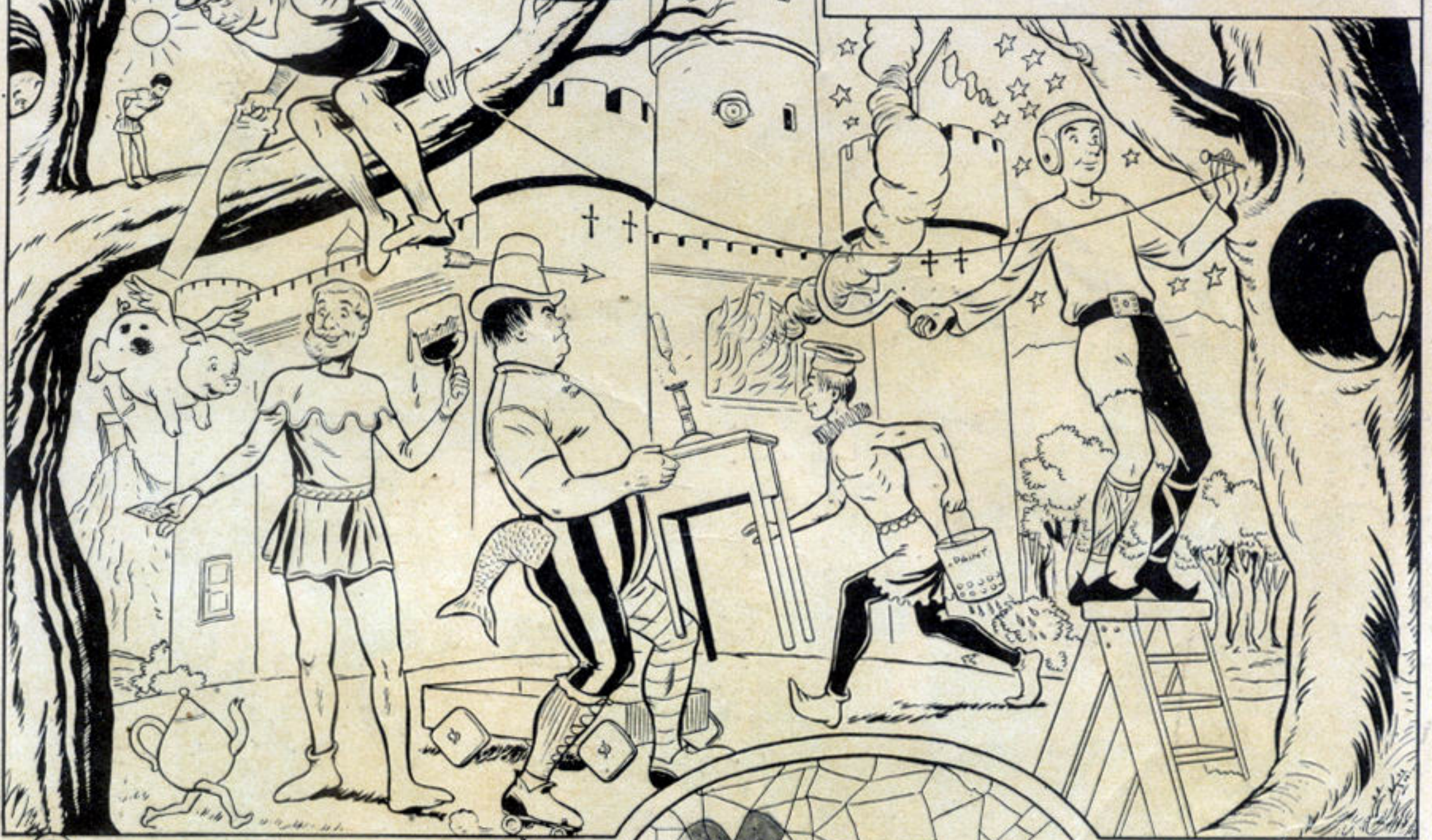
YOUR BROTHER WILL BE RETURNING SOON, BRUCE! WE DISLIKE TO HAVE YOU LEAVE! WON'T YOU STAY AND LIVE WITH US?

LANCE HAS ALREADY INVITED ME TO STAY HERE, AND I HAVE ACCEPTED! NEITHER OF US WILL EVER LACK COMPANIONSHIP AGAIN!

the End

Fun Page

1 THERE ARE A NUMBER OF STRANGE THINGS GOING ON, AS THE SERVANTS AT "CASTLE MIXUP" GET EVERYTHING READY FOR THE PRINCE'S BIRTHDAY PARTY! SEE HOW MANY YOU CAN FIND! 15 IS GOOD; 20 IS EXCELLENT; 25 OR MORE, SUPERIOR!



2 THE KING SENT HIS PRIME MINISTER 50 MILES AWAY TO GET A BIRTHDAY PRESENT THAT THE PRINCE ESPECIALLY WANTED! IF YOU BLACK IN THE DOTTED PIECES WITH A PENCIL, YOU'LL SEE WHAT IT IS!



4 AND HERE ARE THE PRINCE'S BIRTHDAY PRESENTS! LOOK CAREFULLY AND SEE HOW MANY YOU CAN FIND THAT BEGIN WITH THE LETTER "C"!

3 RETURNING TO THE CASTLE, THE PRIME MINISTER LOSES HIS MAP, AND HAS TO FIND HIS WAY BACK THROUGH UNKNOWN COUNTRY WITHOUT BEING CAUGHT BY THE ROBBER BARON, WHO IS LYING IN WAIT FOR HIM! CAN YOU GET HIM BACK SAFELY?



1 THERE ARE JUST 32 MISTAKES! 2 IT'S A PUPPY, AND HIS NAME IS ROVER! 3 KEEP AT IT, AND YOU'LL GET BACK SAFELY! 4 IF YOU LOOK VERY HARD, YOU'LL FIND 27 PRESENTS THAT BEGIN WITH A "C"!

